



# INDIA

ITS ADMINISTRATION & PROGRESS

BY

SIR JOHN STRACHEY, GCSI

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SIR THOMAS W HOLDERNESS, KCSI.

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# DEDICATION TO THE FIRST EDITION

TO

SIR JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN, KCSI

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MY DEAR STEPHEN,

*Fifteen years ago you dedicated one of your books to me, and in now offering to you this less worthy gift, the fittest words that I can find are almost those which you addressed to me. I dedicate this book to you as an expression of strong personal regard and of gratitude for great kindness, and in recollection of that time in India when we served together and which neither of us can forget.*

*I am, my dear STEPHEN,*

*Your sincere friend and late colleague,*

JOHN STRACHEY

*October 1888*



## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

IN 1884 I gave a course of lectures on subjects connected with India before the University of Cambridge. They formed the basis of the first edition of this work, published in 1888. Since that time great changes have been made in the constitution of the Indian Legislatures, in the organisation of the civil services and army, and in other branches of the administration, while the progress of the country in wealth and material prosperity has been immense. A second and revised edition of the book was published in 1894, and so many alterations were then made that the work assumed a new shape, and no division into imaginary lectures remained. In the present edition the changes and additions necessary to make it give, as far as possible, an accurate description of existing facts, have been still greater, it has been much enlarged, parts of the work have been entirely re-written, and its title has been slightly altered. The changes thus made in the original form of the book have one drawback. While it was merely a course of lectures, it was obvious that it professed to be nothing more than a series of papers, not necessarily connected with each other, on various Indian topics, that many subjects of importance necessarily

and designedly remained untouched, and that I did not pretend to attempt the impossible task of describing in a single volume the great continent of India. In that respect the purpose of the book remains as it was, but, instead of being a collection of lectures on certain Indian subjects, it has become a collection of chapters.

Mr Baines, in his *Report on the Indian Census of 1891*, a work which I have often quoted, and to which it would be difficult to give more praise than it deserves, has applied to himself the words of Molière, "Je prends mon bien où je le trouve," and every one who writes, with any just pretence to knowledge, on such a subject as India must say the same. There is no man living competent to give, from his own knowledge alone, an accurate description of a continent as large as civilised Europe, and one that in all its physical characteristics is far more various. Valuable works and official reports have been published in recent years, dealing with Indian subjects, or with special branches of the administration, and to these I have, in the body of the work, acknowledged my obligations. Among them I must here especially mention the contributions to our knowledge made by Sir Henry Maine, Sir James Stephen, Sir Alfred Lyall, Mr J A Baines,<sup>1</sup> Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Mr H H Risley,<sup>2</sup> and the reports of the three Famine Commissions of 1880, 1898, and 1901. I am under many obligations of a more personal kind. Mr A. N. Wollaston, Sir Stuart Bayley, Sir John Edge, Sir Charles Lyall, and Mr Lionel Abrahams have given to me, in the preparation of this edition, both from their personal knowledge and from the records of the India Office,

<sup>1</sup> [Now Sir Athelstane Baines, Kt.]

<sup>2</sup> [Now Sir Herbert Risley, K.C.I.E.]

help for which I cannot sufficiently thank them. Mr Bourdillon, now acting as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and who possesses a knowledge and experience of the subject which few can equal, has been good enough to revise my account of that great province, and Sir Antony MacDonnell<sup>1</sup> has not been prevented by his present arduous duties from going through the proofs of the chapters which treat of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the government of which, a short time ago, he was administering with conspicuous ability. My special thanks are also due to Mr T Morison,<sup>2</sup> the accomplished Principal of the Muhammadan College at Aligarh, to Sir Charles A Elliott; to Sir Hugh Barnes, the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, to my son, Major J Strachey, and to Mr G H. M Batten, who, in addition to much other assistance, has contributed to the book the most complete account which, in my opinion, has been written of all the facts connected with the opium revenue of India. Thus, if I may apply to such a subject as the improvement of this book the famous words of the poet, it has at least had the advantage of the help of "the masters of those who know"

When a man has been for many years writing and speaking on matters to which his life has been mainly devoted, there must be much about which he can say nothing new. As Mr John Morley has written in somewhat similar circumstances, "These borrowings from my former self the reader will perhaps be willing to excuse on the old Greek principle that a man may say a thing once as he would have it said—*δὲς δὲ οὐκ ἐνδέχεται*—he may

<sup>1</sup> [Now Lord MacDonnell of Swinford, P O J]

<sup>2</sup> [Now Sir Theodore Morison, K C I E]

not say it twice " But it is not from myself alone that I have borrowed without acknowledgment in the present edition. In 1882 a book, now long out of print, was published by my brother, General Sir Richard Strachey, and myself on the Finances and Public Works of India. It was our joint production, our opinions were so much in unison, and were so constantly formed in close personal communication, that while I know that I owe far more to him than he has owed to me, it is impossible for me to say to which of us some parts of that book are to be attributed. In the present edition I have borrowed from it freely. And, having named my brother, I must add, because this is the last opportunity that I shall ever have of saying it, that there are, in my belief, few men living who have done so much, often in ways unknown to the outside world, for the improvement of Indian administration. It is to him that India owes the initiation of that great policy of the systematic extension of railways and canals which has been crowned with such extraordinary success, which has increased to an incalculable extent the wealth of the country, and has profoundly altered its condition. To him is due the conception of those measures of financial and administrative decentralisation which have had the most far-reaching consequences, and which were pronounced by Sir Henry Maine to be by far the greatest and most successful reforms carried out in India in his time. To his active support is largely due the initiation of the measures, which have proved of the highest value, for preventing the destruction of the Indian forests, and for their scientific protection and management. He it was who first organised the great department of

public works, and laid the foundations of the scientific study of Indian meteorology. He was the first, many years ago, to advise that reform of the currency which has now been carried out, and the delay of which has involved India in incalculable loss. If the weights and measures of India are still in a condition of mischievous chaos, it is because, through the powerful influence of ignorant prejudice, the Act which he introduced and carried through the legislature, and which is still on the statute book, has remained a dead letter. He presided over the first of the Commissions which have taught us the true principles upon which Indian famines can be combated.

I suppose that no two men had greater opportunities, through a long course of years, than my brother and myself of obtaining knowledge regarding India. For many years we took part, often in close association, in its government, and it would be an affectation of humility to profess that this part was not an important one. There is hardly a great office of the state, from that of Acting-Viceroy, Lieutenant-Governor, or Member of Council downwards, which one or other of us has not held, and hardly a department of the administration with which one or other of us has not been intimately connected. The book of which my brother and myself were the joint authors was dedicated by us to the public servants of all classes, the results of whose labours for India we had endeavoured, in some measure, to record. Whatever may have been done by viceroys, and governors, and great commanders, the soldiers and civilians whose names have hardly been heard in England have done much more in building up the splendid fabric of our



Indian Empire It is by the everyday work of administration that the real foundations of our power have been maintained and strengthened, and the steady progress of the country has been secured. It is, indeed, to that part of their lives that Indian officials like my brother and myself, actively concerned although we have been in the work of the Central Government, look back with perhaps the greatest interest We may be forgiven if we take pride in remembering that during the last century and a half four generations of our family have given to India the best portion of their lives

A distinguished Frenchman, M Harmand, did me the honour of translating into French the first edition of this book, and he prefaced his work with an Introduction which, if it had been less flattering to myself, I should have been glad to reproduce in English, showing as it did, the opinions of a most competent and intelligent foreign observer on the government of our Indian Empire M Harmand, during a long residence in the Asiatic possessions of France and in British India, in both of which he held important official posts, had rare opportunities of forming an accurate judgment on the problems which have to be solved by the western rulers of oriental peoples He has discussed the principles on which the government of a great eastern possession can alone be wisely conducted, and, taking India as his object-lesson, has endeavoured to show to his countrymen why the efforts of the English to establish a solid and self-supporting dominion in the east have been crowned with such extraordinary success Another interesting book, written with aims similar to

those of M Harmand, has been published by M Chailley-Bert, the worthy possessor of an illustrious name<sup>1</sup> I commend to Englishmen who feel an honourable pride in the work of the men who have built up and who are maintaining the wonderful structure of their Indian Empire, the calm and impartial testimony of M Harmand and M Chailley-Bert

JOHN STRACHEY

April 1903

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## EDITOR'S NOTE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

IN an appreciative review of Sir John Strachey's life and character which appeared in the *Times* of December 20, 1907, the day after his death, it was remarked that his book on India was still "the most concise and informed of detailed expositions of the principles and methods of British rule in India" The reason is not far to seek It is given in the preface which Sir John Strachey wrote for the third edition of the work and which is reprinted above To use Sir John Strachey's own words, there was "hardly a great office of the state" in India which he or his brother, the late General Sir Richard Strachey, had not held. For many years the brothers were closely associated in the government of the country Their combined labours had a strong and lasting influence over the policy and the constitution of the Indian Government in every department of affairs Successive Viceroy

<sup>1</sup> *La Colonisation de l'Indo Chine, l'Expérience anglaise*

and successive Secretaries of State turned to them for counsel, and found their experience, their capacity for constructive statesmanship, and their broad and liberal views on political questions, of inestimable value. This book, if not the joint product of their minds, is the record of their joint achievements. It describes a system of government which they, more than any other public servants of their day, had helped to fashion. It narrates the concrete results of this system, with intimate first-hand knowledge of its working and of the country and the populations which it affected, and with an honourable pride in its pacific triumphs and in the benefits which it had conferred on their fellow Indian subjects. A work of this kind is more than instructive. It stimulates and fascinates because it speaks with conviction and authority. It has the glow of personal emotion and the setting of individual endeavour.

The revision of such a book presents difficulties. Students of Bagehot's brilliant treatise on *The English Constitution* will remember how in a later edition he confessed his inability to revise and bring it up to date. He had sketched the working of the English constitution as it was in the days of Lord Palmerston. Surveying it seven years after he found that many changes had occurred, some of spirit and some of detail, and he felt that if he tried to change the sketch into a sketch of the present time, he would probably blur the picture and give something equally unlike both. The best plan, he decided, in such a case was, "to keep the original sketch in all essentials as it was first written, and to describe shortly such changes, either in the

constitution itself or in the constitutions compared with it, as seem material" This he effected by means of a supplementary essay The risk of blurring the picture which Mr Bagehot, with his fine literary instinct, feared in respect of his own work is still more imminent when the revising hand is other than the author's I have been fully conscious of it in the present case. For several reasons the particular expedient which commended itself to Mr Bagehot was not open to me In Mr Bagehot's book the fundamental principles, dominant forces, and general tendencies of constitutional government occupy the first place, the detailed mechanism of administration is scarcely touched on In Sir John Strachey's book the order is reversed A large part of it consists of a detailed account of the working of the various departments of the Indian Government and of the results It is a storehouse of facts Its direct utility in this respect depends on the facts being up to date This necessitates, where facts and figures are concerned, some changes in the text But such alterations have been kept within the narrowest possible limits Where footnotes would equally serve the purpose, they have been used.<sup>1</sup> Topics requiring a somewhat fuller treatment have been dealt with in notes appended to the chapters Other portions of the book, which are descriptive of the country and its inhabitants or which obviously reflect the personal views of the author on political and administrative questions, have been left virtually untouched. As instances, Chapter XXII, which describes Bengal in

<sup>1</sup> The notes appended to the several chapters, and all footnotes enclosed in brackets, are by the editor

the days when it formed a single province , Chapter X , on the Indian import duties, and Chapter XII , on the opium question, may be specified Other instances are, Chapter XXIV., treating of the native states of India, and Chapter XXV , containing the author's final reflections on the Indian problem as a whole The aim throughout has been to preserve the individuality of the book, with such amendments of figures and statements of fact, and such comments and additional information, as may serve to make it useful as a work of reference How far this end has been attained must be left to others to judge

T W HOLDERNESS

*January 1911*

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SIR HENRY MAINE, referring to the ignorance regarding India which prevails even among educated men in England, declared his conviction that for one who desires to unveil the stores of interest which India contains, the first necessity is that he should not shrink from speaking on matters which appear to him too elementary to deserve discussion, that he should sympathise with an ignorance which few felicitous efforts have yet been made to dispel, and that he should remember that the language of administration and government in India has become so highly specialised and technical that it forms an imperfect medium for the communication of ideas to Englishmen. Believing this, I make no apology for beginning this book with some very elementary matters, and I ask at starting this elementary question, What is India? What does this name India really signify? The answer that I have sometimes given

sounds paradoxical, but it is true. There is no such country, and this is the first and most essential fact about India that can be learned.

India is a name which we give to a great region including a multitude of different countries. There is no general Indian term that corresponds to it. The name Hindustan is never applied in India, as we apply it, to the whole of the Indian continent, it signifies the country north of the Narbada river, and especially the northern portion of the basins of the Ganges and Jumna.

I have been told by intelligent natives of India who have visited Europe that they could see little difference between the European countries through which they had travelled, the languages being equally unintelligible offered to them no marks of distinction; the cities, the costumes, the habits of life, the manners and customs of the people, so far as a passing oriental traveller could judge, seemed much the same in England, in France, and in Italy. The differences between the countries of India—between, for instance, Bengal and the Punjab, or between Madras and Rajputána—seemed to them, on the other hand, immense, and beyond comparison greater than those existing between the countries of Europe. Englishmen have often similar impressions in visiting India, they cannot see the great diversities that exist. As to persons who know nothing of geology or botany or agriculture, rocks and trees and crops present comparatively few distinctive features, so it is with those who look with uninformed minds on conditions of life and society to which they have not been accustomed.

The differences between the countries of Europe are undoubtedly smaller than those between the countries of India. Scotland is more like Spain than Bengal is

like the Punjab European civilisation has grown up under conditions which have produced a larger measure of uniformity than has been reached in the countries of the Indian continent, often separated from each other by greater distances, by greater obstacles to communication, and by greater differences of climate. It is probable that not less than fifty languages, which may rightly be called separate, are spoken in India. The diversities of religion and race are as wide in India as in Europe, and political catastrophes have been as frequent and as violent. There are no countries in civilised Europe in which the people differ so much as the man of Madras differs from the Sikh, and the languages of southern India are as unintelligible in Lahore as they would be in London. A native of Calcutta or Bombay is as much a foreigner in Delhi or Peshawar as an Englishman is a foreigner in Rome or Paris.

People sometimes complain that Indian authorities differ so greatly among themselves that it is hardly possible to learn the truth. These apparent contradictions have frequently no real existence, but arise from false generalisations.

To one, for instance, who has gained his knowledge of India in lower Bengal, India is a country of almost constant heat and damp, luxuriant vegetation, rivers, tanks, rice-fields and cocoa-nuts, with few cities and no monuments of art, densely inhabited by a mild and timid population. To such an India as this, a vivid imagination could hardly conceive a completer contrast than the India of Agra or Lahore. Instead of one of the dampest and greenest countries of the earth, we find in the early summer one of the brownest and most arid, a country scorched with winds like the blast of a furnace but in the winter it has the climate of an Italian



spring, cold, frosty, and invigorating In the latter season, instead of the tropical vegetation of Bengal, we find thousands of square miles covered with wheat and barley and the products of the temperate zone It is a country with famous cities and splendid monuments, and its population is not inferior to that of many parts of Europe in manliness and vigour

I have spoken of the different countries of India, but they are not countries in the ordinary European sense A European country is usually a separate entity, occupied by a nation more or less socially and politically distinct But in India, as Sir Alfred Lyall has explained in his *Asiatic Studies*, a work that is a mine of knowledge on Indian matters, there are no nations of the modern European type The same fact has been clearly brought out by Professor Seeley in his lectures on *The Expansion of England*

“Geographical boundaries,” says Sir Alfred Lyall, “have no correspondence at all with distinctive institutions or groupings of the people, and have comparatively little political significance Little is gained toward knowing who and what a man is by ascertaining the State he obeys, or the territory he dwells in, these being things which of themselves denote no difference of race, institutions, or manners Even from the point of political allegiance, the government under which a man may be living is an accidental arrangement, which the British Viceroy or some other inevitable power decided upon yesterday and may alter to morrow Nor would such a change be grievous unless it divorced from him a ruler of his own tribe or his own faith The European observer—accustomed to the massing of people in great territorial groups, and to the ideas (now immemorial in the west) contained in such expressions as fatherland, mother-country, patriotism, domicile, and the like—has here to realise the novelty of finding himself in a strange part of the world, where political citizenship is as yet quite unknown, and territorial sovereignty or even feudalism only just appearing For a parallel in the history of

western Europe we must go back as far as the Merovingian period, when chiefs of barbaric tribes or bands were converting themselves into kings or counts, or, perhaps, he should carry his retrospect much further, and conceive himself to be looking at some country of Asia Minor lying within the influence of Rome at its zenith, but just outside its jurisdiction. He gradually discovers the population of central India to be distributed, not into great governments, or nationalities, or religious denominations, not even into widespread races, such as those which are still contending for political supremacy in eastern Europe, but into various and manifold denominations of tribes, clans, septs, castes, and sub-castes, religious orders, and devotional brotherhoods " <sup>1</sup>

This is the first and most essential thing to learn about India—that there is not, and never was an India, or even any country of India, possessing, according to European ideas, any sort of unity, physical, political, social, or religious, no Indian nation, no "people of India," of which we hear so much.

Until we rightly appreciate the significance of such facts we shall, among other things, never understand how our Indian Empire has come into existence, and how this vast dominion is maintained by a handful of Englishmen. There was never, as Professor Seeley has said, any conquest of India by the English, according to the ordinary sense of the word "conquest." The conquest was rather, to borrow his expression, "in the nature of an internal revolution," directed by Englishmen, but carried out for the most part through the natives of India themselves. No superiority of the Englishman would have enabled England to conquer by her own military power the continent of India with its 300 millions of people, nor could she hold it in subjection if it had been occupied by distinct nations. In

<sup>1</sup> *Asiatic Studies*, p. 152. Sir Alfred Lyall was specially referring to central India in this passage, but it is equally true of India generally.

the words of Professor Seeley, "the fundamental fact is that India had no jealousy of the foreigner, because there was no India, and therefore, properly speaking, no foreigner"<sup>1</sup>

It is a consequence of all this, that in every great Indian province the political sympathies of large sections of the population towards men who, geographically speaking, are their own countrymen, are often as imperfect as they are towards their English masters. We have never destroyed in India a national government, no national sentiment has been wounded, no national pride has been humiliated, and this not through any design or merit of our own, but because no Indian nationalities have existed. They no more exist in the so-called 'native states' than in our own territories, and the most important of those states are ruled by princes who are almost as much foreigners to their subjects as we are ourselves.

The diversities between the countries of India and the people inhabiting them extend, more or less, to their administration by the British Government. The ordinary English notion is that the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy and his Council carry on, somehow or other, the government of India. Few Englishmen understand how comparatively little these high authorities have to do with the actual administration, or appreciate the fact that the seven or eight chief provinces of British India, which may be compared, in area and population, to the chief countries of Europe, have all their separate and, in a great measure, their independent governments. Under circumstances of such extreme diversity as those which exist in India, no single system of administration could be appropriate.

<sup>1</sup> *The Expansion of England*, p. 206

Instead of introducing unsuitable novelties from other countries, Indian or European, we have taken, in each province, with some unfortunate exceptions, the old local institutions as the basis of our own arrangements. Good or bad administration in India depends to a far greater extent on the government of the province than on the distant authorities in Calcutta or London. The vast majority of the population is hardly conscious of the existence of the Viceroy and his government. From time to time a glimpse is caught of the great Lord Sáhib. He passes perhaps along the streets of some famous city with a train of elephants recalling the traditions of Aurangzib, or at some immense gathering, far more picturesque and magnificent than any of the ceremonial shows of Europe, he receives in *darbár* the homage of chiefs and princes. From the splendour of his surroundings people derive some vague notions of an authority above the powers by which they know that they are governed.

Although in the management of the greater portion of the public business immediately affecting the everyday interests of the 294 millions of people inhabiting India the part of the so-called Government of India is comparatively small, this central power, administered by the Governor-General in Council, under the supreme authority of the British Government at home, has, of course, from another point of view the highest importance. It regulates and harmonises the governments of the British provinces, controls the native states and our relations with foreign powers, provides for military defence, makes war and peace, and manages those branches of the administration which directly concern the general interests of the empire.

It must not be supposed that such bonds of union

can in any way lead towards the growth of a single Indian nationality. However long may be the duration of our dominion, however powerful may be the centralising attraction of our government, or the influence of the common interests which grow up, no such issue can follow. It is conceivable that national sympathies may arise in particular Indian countries, but that they should ever extend to India generally, that men of Bombay, the Punjab, Bengal, and Madras should ever feel that they belong to one great Indian nation, is impossible. We might with as much reason and probability look forward to a time when a single nation will have taken the place of the various nations of Europe

I wish especially to insist on the fact that we can never hope to arrive at any accurate knowledge of India until we properly appreciate the immense diversities of the countries included under that name, and understand that there is no part of the world in which it is more easy to be misled by generalisations

The changes through which India has passed during the last half-century have been so great, that it is often very difficult to deduce useful inferences from the comparison of its present and past condition. The changes in the condition of the country, in its available resources, and in its requirements for necessary administrative and material progress have been numerous and profound.

The territorial extension of the British Empire in India since the middle of the nineteenth century has been immense. Great provinces have been added to it, with an area about equal to that of France and the German Empire put together, with a population of more than sixty millions. This fact is alone sufficient to show how easily we may be misled by general comparisons, but other changes not less important have

occurred, and they have been hardly less remarkable in the older provinces than in the new

There was formerly in British India, comparatively speaking, little of what we now think the first necessities of a civilised administration. When, in 1844, I first went from Calcutta to the present Agra province, I was carried about a thousand miles in a palanquin on men's shoulders, and it took some three weeks to toil through a journey which is now accomplished in twenty-four hours, there were no other means of travelling through the richest and most civilised parts of India. Speaking generally, roads and bridges had only begun to appear, railways were not thought of, the value of irrigation as a means of affording protection to the people against famine had hardly been recognised, there were few barracks in which English soldiers could live with tolerable health and comfort, there were few jails in which a sentence of imprisonment did not carry with it a serious probability that it would prove a sentence of death.

British India, however, even at that time was entering on a phase of rapid change. The energies of the government and its officers, which had at first been unable to do more than secure the bare existence of British power in India, by degrees rendered that power paramount. Then they were applied to its consolidation, and to the evolution of an organised system of administration out of the chaos bequeathed to us by the old rulers of the country. The firm establishment of order was followed by improvements in all directions. A vigorous impulse was given to material progress, and among the most active causes of the great changes which were beginning must be ranked the introduction of new and rapid means of communication. These not only directly

developed the resources of the country, increased the wealth of the people, and profoundly altered the conditions of life, but they stimulated the vitality of every branch of the administration, they brought the various provinces of the Empire closer together, and England closer to India, English influence became stronger and stronger, and all classes, as they were more frequently and immediately brought into contact with European habits and civilisation, had set before them new and higher standards

Even before the mutinies of 1857 this process of change had made great progress. After that revolution, which for a time nearly swept away our government through a large part of India, the change went on with accelerated speed. Thousands of Englishmen, not only soldiers, but Englishmen of almost every class, poured into India. Ten thousand things were demanded which India had not got, but which it was felt must be provided. The country must be covered with railways and telegraphs, and roads and bridges. Irrigation canals must be made to preserve the people from starvation. Barracks must be built for a great European army, and every sort of sanitary arrangement which could benefit the troops must be carried out. The whole paraphernalia of a great civilised administration, according to the modern notions of what that means, had to be provided.

This was true not only in regard to matters of imperial concern. Demands for improvement, similar to those which fell upon the central government, cropped up in every city and in every district of the country.

Compare, for instance, what Calcutta was when Lord Lawrence became Viceroy in 1864, and what it is now. This city, the capital of British India, supplies an excel-

lent type of what has been everywhere going on. The filth of the city used to rot away in the midst of the population in pestilential ditches, or was thrown into the Hugh, there to float backwards and forwards with every change of tide. To nine-tenths of the inhabitants clean water was unknown. They drank either the filthy water of the river, polluted with every conceivable abomination, or the still filthier contents of the shallow tanks. The river, which was the main source of supply to thousands of people, was not only the receptacle for ordinary filth, it was the great graveyard of the city. I forget how many thousand corpses were thrown into it every year. I forget how many hundred corpses were thrown into it from the Government hospitals and jails, for these practices were not confined to the poor and ignorant, they were followed or allowed, as a matter of course, by the officers of the Government and of the municipality. I remember the sights which were seen in Calcutta in those days, in the hospitals, and jails, and markets, and slaughter-houses, and public streets. The place was declared, in official reports, written by myself in language which was not, and could not be, stronger than the truth required, to be hardly fit for civilised men to live in. There are now few cities in Europe with which many parts of Calcutta need fear comparison, and, although in the poorer quarters there is still much room for improvement, there is hardly a city in the world which has made greater progress.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [A large scheme for improving the overcrowded parts of Calcutta, by opening new roads and clearing away insanitary dwellings, is at present before the Legislative Council of Bengal. It is estimated to involve a gross expenditure of several millions sterling, which will be met by special taxation, by a grant-in aid from the Government, and by re sales of surplus land. The administration of the scheme will be placed in the hands of a Board of Trustees, on which the municipality and the Government will be represented. A City Improvement Trust of a similar kind was created in Bombay in 1895, and has already done



I do not mean to say that Indian cities generally were as bad as Calcutta. This was far from being the case, but Calcutta affords, not the less, a good example of what has been and is still going on in India. Illustrations of the same sort might easily be multiplied. In 1865, for instance, in the city of Rangoon, containing, at that time, more than 100,000 people, with half a million tons of shipping, there was not a single public lamp, no supply of wholesome water, not a single drain except the surface drains at the sides of the streets, and no means of removing the filth out of the town. About the same time, the Royal Commission for inquiring into the sanitary state of the army in India declared that thousands of the lives of our soldiers had been and were still being sacrificed in consequence of bad and insufficient barrack accommodation, and neglect of every sanitary precaution. So again, the Government was told, and in many parts of India it was certainly true, that, in consequence of the insufficiency of jail accommodation, the prisoners were dying at a rate frightful to think of, and that the necessary proceedings of the courts of justice involved consequences repugnant to humanity.

Thus arose demands for the requirements of civilised life and of modern administration, which had to be provided, and to a great extent for the first time, within the space of a few years. This was true not only of material appliances, of roads, and railways, and canals, and barracks, and city improvements, and so forth, for the demand for improved administration became so strong that it is not too much to say that the whole

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much to improve that city and to remedy the evils which the influx of a large industrial population, for the most part poor and ignorant, has called into existence.]

of the public services were reorganised. Thus, for example, the police, which was in a most unsatisfactory condition throughout India, was, although even now it cannot be said to be good, placed on a completely new footing. The changes in the judicial service, and in the laws which it administers, have been great. Lord Lawrence, when he was Viceroy, declared that the inadequacy of the pay given to the native judges, and to the chief ministerial officers of the courts, was a public scandal, many of these officers receiving salaries less than the wages earned in many parts of India by the better class of bricklayers and carpenters. No honest or satisfactory administration of justice was, under such conditions, possible.

The demands for every sort of public improvement, moral and material, which thus sprang up, could not be resisted. Whatever might be the cost, remedies had to be provided in the most complete way, and in the shortest time possible.

A greater or more admirable work was never conceived in any country than that which was undertaken, and which in a great degree has been accomplished by Englishmen in India, and which is still going on. That mistakes should have been made in dealing with a country larger and more populous than the whole of civilised Europe was inevitable. Nevertheless, the work has been excellently done, and with this further merit, that there has been little talk about it. For all this the credit is not due to the initiative of the Government alone. India has been fortunate in her Viceroys, but still more fortunate in the possession of a most admirable and hard-working body of public servants, to whose intelligence, devotion to their duties, and self-sacrifice, the results actually obtained are mainly due.

The vast majority of the population of India remains, in many respects, as it has remained from time immemorial, almost unchanged and unchangeable. It is still, in the words of Sir Henry Maine, "an energetic expression of the past, hardly affected by its contact with the western world." But, while this is true, it is not the less true that in material progress and in the improvement of the public administration the magnitude of the work that has been accomplished in India is extraordinary. In these respects the England of Queen Anne was hardly more different from the England of to-day, than the India of Lord Ellenborough from the India of Lord Curzon. The country has been covered with roads and railways, her almost impassable rivers have been bridged, the most magnificent canals and works of irrigation existing in the world have been constructed for the protection of the people against famine, our soldiers live in barracks that can hardly be equalled in Europe, quarters which once had a reputation little better than that of pest-houses are now among the healthiest in the British Empire, and the rate of mortality among the troops is not one-half what it was, the improvement in the jails and in the health of the prisoners has been equally remarkable, the cities and towns are totally different places from what they were.

Simultaneously with the progress of all these and a thousand other material improvements, with the increase of trade, the creation of new industries, and a vast development of wealth, there has gone on an equally remarkable change in every branch of the public administration. The laws have been codified, and improved, and simplified, and India has obtained, to a degree unthought of before, protection for life and

property, and an honest administration of justice All over India we have been building schools, and hospitals, and dispensaries The natives of India have been admitted to a far larger share in the government of their own country, municipal institutions, the first practical step in political education, have been established in every considerable town throughout British India It is needless to continue this catalogue of the changes that have taken place, but it is not the least remarkable part of the story that the accomplishment of all this work, and the immense expenditure incurred, which have increased to an incalculable extent the wealth and comfort of the people, have added nothing to the actual burden of their taxation

This is a subject to which I shall return, but a few other facts may here be given to illustrate the changes that have occurred in India

In 1840 the total value of the imports and exports of British India was about £19,000,000, in 1909-10 it exceeded £232,000,000 The trade of India is more than three times as great now as that of the United Kingdom was in the beginning of the nineteenth century In 1854, the first year for which any figures are forthcoming, the number of letters passing through the Post Office was 19,000,000, while in 1910 it was 920,000,000 It might be stated how many millions of tons of goods are now carried on the railways, and how many telegraphic messages are despatched, but as sixty years ago railways and telegraphs in India had only begun to exist, there would be no comparison to make

All this implies no disparagement of the work of our predecessors On the contrary, great as, with the aid of modern science and capital, our later progress has been, it is certain that ever since our countrymen

first established themselves as the dominant power in southern Asia, each successive period, when viewed in relation to the circumstances of the time, has yielded, in one direction or another, not less important results. No language of admiration can be too strong for the noble work accomplished in India by the soldiers and civilians of former days. The greatness of their work, and of the work of which they laid the foundations, may best be seen by a comparison of the neighbouring Asiatic countries with British India. Not only has it been rescued from the incessant sequence of foreign conquest, plunder, and anarchy which had marked its past history, but in little more than a century it has acquired a position of peace, good government, and wealth, in which it will compare favourably with that of many of the states of Europe.

There have always been, and perhaps always will be, people who, according to the unfortunate English fashion of decrying the great achievements of their countrymen, endeavour persistently to show that, in consequence of the wickedness or folly of our Government, India is in a state bordering upon bankruptcy, that its people are becoming poorer and poorer, more and more miserable, more and more exposed to ruin and death by famine, that crushing taxation goes on constantly increasing, that an enormous and ruinous tribute is exacted in India to be spent in England, and I know not what else. I have no inclination to reply to statements of this sort. "I know," said the wisest of English statesmen, "the obstinacy of unbelief in those perverted minds which have no delight but in contemplating the supposed distress, and predicting the immediate ruin of their country. These birds of evil presage at all times have grated our ears with their melancholy song, and,

by some strange fatality or other, it has generally happened that they have poured forth their loudest and deepest lamentations at the periods of our most abundant prosperity"<sup>1</sup>

It is not pretended that the social, material, and political conditions of India do not leave ample room for improvement. Defects of many sorts can readily be pointed out. But it is through the progress made that these become known. In the arts of administration, as in all other applications of knowledge, our views widen with each successive step we take, and the emphatic recognition that much yet remains to be done for India neither dims the lustre of what has been accomplished nor should cool the ardour of those who there continue the strife with human misfortune, weakness, and ignorance.

That India has gone on, with a speed hardly surpassed in any country, steadily increasing in knowledge, in wealth, and in all the elements of progress, that every branch of the public administration has constantly improved in honesty and efficiency, and that of all the things for which England deserves honour in the world, there has been none greater or better than her government of India—these are to me facts not requiring to be argued about.

There are other critics of our Indian government who deserve to be spoken of with more respect than those "birds of evil presage" to whom I have referred. We often hear expressions of regret that the days of strong personal government have passed away. We are told that the men who, with much smaller personal authority than that of their predecessors, now carry on the everyday work of administration have neither the vigour nor

<sup>1</sup> Burke's *Third Letter on a Regicide Peace*

the intimate knowledge of the country for which our officers were formerly so distinguished, and that they have less sympathy with the ideas and feelings of the people. While it may be admitted that there is in this an element of truth, I am satisfied, for my part, that we have gained far more than we have lost. Now that the distance between India and England is measured in days and not in months, the Englishman in India has become less Indian and more English in all his habits and in all his feelings. He may know less of some aspects of Indian life, but he is no longer cut off, as he once was, from the invigorating and most wholesome influence of his own country. Methods of administration which were once the only ones that were appropriate, have become unsuitable and impracticable, and I entirely disbelieve that the men of the present generation are one whit less capable than those who went before them, they know more and not less of all that it is most necessary for them to know, and the results of their work are more and not less excellent. There can hardly be a more striking proof that there has been no falling off in the qualities necessary for the wise and vigorous government of a great dependency than the manner in which, within recent years, new provinces have been transformed from a condition in which there was no tolerable government, and no safety for life or property, into peaceful and prosperous countries. No more remarkable story than that of the pacification and progress of Burma can be told of any portion of the Empire.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER I

*Page 3* —“A native of Calcutta, etc.” This is still substantially accurate as regards the mass of the population. But as regards the educated classes, a common system of government, the spread of trade

and commerce, the increasing habit of travel, and the diffusion of the English language, have of late years done much to break down the walls of separation between different parts of India. An educated Indian is now at home in any of the larger cities. The National Congress holds its annual gatherings, which attract large throngs of delegates and visitors, in turn in every part of India. It is significant that the language used at these gatherings is English, the one tongue which enables men differing in race and language to understand each other. The ideas also are European. The emergence of a distinct Indian nationality among the educated classes is possibly only a matter of time, if existing conditions endure. Whatever direction its predominant sentiments may ultimately take, it will owe its origin and inspiration to the English language and English political thought.

Page 5 —“There is not, and never was, etc.” The statement made in the text may be supplemented by two quotations from M. Joseph Chailley's *Administrative Problems of British India*. M. Joseph Chailley's book *L'Inde Britannique* represents twenty years of thought and ten of actual labour. It is the most recent study of the present state of India, and is dispassionate and well-informed. The quotations are from the English version (Macmillan & Co., 1910).

“Not only has India never been a single nation, she has never, like Europe, witnessed the formation of one of those conquering tribes which, agglomerating to itself outside elements, constitutes at a given period a people with a common soul. Her physical features, her races, her languages, and her history have doomed her to variety, and if there should ever emerge a homogeneous Indian people, with a single language and a common patriotism, she will owe this to Europe” (page 50).

“India is not a nation. It is an agglomeration of peoples which differ in race, religion, institutions, and language, and which have merely been grouped together by the accident of foreign dominion. There was a partial grouping of this sort under the Mughals, it has become complete under the English, but there is no real fusion. The peoples merely live side by side, and are still dominated by the recollection of the past. If the British rule were to disappear to-morrow, Sikhs, Musalmans, Marathas, other Hindus and Burmans would probably not consent to remain united for a single day, and even under the rule of England, which is usually light, but always firm and, on occasion, stern, these national rivalries (one might almost call them hatreds) betray themselves—sometimes by cautious representations, in which Asiatic aristocracies excel, sometimes by furious attacks which place irreconcilable multitudes at violent issue” (page 547).

To the institution of caste the extraordinary diversities which the



population of India presents are largely due India is not singular in having received in the course of centuries successive hordes of foreign invaders But it is unique in its system of prohibitions of intermarriage between persons of different racial stocks Caste was not known to the early Aryan invaders But at some later point of time their descendants closed their ranks to all further admixture of blood Once started in India this principle under Brahminical influences developed into the religious, social and political system known as caste. For at least twelve centuries within the Indian community intermarriage between castes has been absolutely prohibited. "The effect," says Sir Bampfylde Fuller, "of this permanent maintenance of human types is that the population is heterogeneous to an extent that it needs actual experience to appreciate It is no question of rich and poor, of town and country, of employer and employed the differences lie far deeper The population of a district or a town is a collection of different nationalities—almost different species—of mankind that will not eat or drink or intermarry with one another, and that are governed in the more important affairs of life by committees of their own. It is hardly too much to say that by the caste system the inhabitants of India are differentiated into two thousand species of mankind, which in the physical relations of life have as little in common as the inmates of a zoological garden." (*Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment*, page 41 )

## CHAPTER II

### THE GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA

The Indian Empire—area and population—The main features of Indian geography—The Indo Gangetic plain—Presidencies and Provinces—The table land of central and southern India—Physical causes of the great differences between the countries of India—The monsoons

THE Indian Empire has an area of more than 1,700,000 square miles, and a population of nearly 300 millions. In area and population it is greater than Europe without Russia. A line drawn from its northern boundary beyond the mountains of Kashmir to Cape Comorin, the southern extremity of its vast peninsula, exceeds 2000 miles in length, a distance almost as great as that from Gibraltar to St Petersburg. It is nearly equally far from the borders of Baluchistán on the west to the point where the eastern frontier of Assam approaches the frontier of China.

Excluding Burma and the mountain countries of the north, India proper may be roughly divided into two regions

The first of these is a vast alluvial plain, lying immediately below the Himálaya, and stretching with an unbroken surface for some 1700 miles across northern India. Its eastern and central portions are watered by the Ganges and Báhmaputrá and their tributaries, the northern and western portions by the river-system of the

Indus. At its highest point, on the watershed between the feeders of the Indus and Ganges, it is not more than 1000 feet above the sea. At its eastern end, it extends over the delta of the Ganges and Bráhmáputra, and includes the greater part of lower Bengal. At its northern and western extremities, it spreads down the Indus to the Arabian Sea, over the Punjab, the western states of Rajputána, and Sind. The central portion of the plain comprises the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The alluvial deposits of which this vast tract is composed are, as Sir Richard Strachey says, "so finely comminuted that it is no exaggeration to say that it is possible to go from the Bay of Bengal up the Ganges, through the Punjab, and down the Indus again to the sea, over a distance of 2000 miles and more, without finding a pebble, however small"<sup>1</sup>. The Indo-Gangetic plain comprises the richest, the most fertile, the most populous, and historically the most famous countries of India. Its south-western extension includes the desert tracts of western Rajputána and the almost rainless districts of Sind. It covers more than 500,000 square miles, an area almost as large as that of France, with the German and Austrian Empires, and it contains more than 160 millions of people.

The greater part of the northern plain, excluding the countries on the extreme west, was formerly included, for certain purposes, in the so-called presidency of Bengal. I shall have to explain how the name Bengal has had, at different periods, different meanings, and how the term 'presidency,' although still sometimes used in official papers, has almost ceased to have any special signification. British India is now divided not into the three presidencies of Bengal,

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. "Asia."

Madras, and Bombay, but into provinces, nine of which are extensive countries under separate Governments

The second region of India lies to the south of the Indo-Gangetic plain, and includes the great triangular peninsula which projects into the Indian Ocean. It has an area of about 700,000 square miles, with a population of more than 120 millions.

The greater part of this tract consists of a hilly table-land,<sup>1</sup> having an average elevation above the sea of about 1500 feet, but rising in the south, in Mysore, to 3000 feet. It may be said, in general terms, to include the whole of that part of India which lies to the south of the tropic of Cancer, with a relatively small extension to the north, where it gradually merges into the southern borders of the Gangetic plain. On the western and eastern sides of the peninsula, the table-land terminates in the ranges known as the western and eastern Gháts. Roughly speaking, they run parallel to the coast on the two sides of southern India, leaving between them and the sea a more or less broad strip of low-lying land. The eastern Gháts are an ill-defined range of no great height. The western Gháts rise steeply from the sea to about 4000 feet, and near their southern extremity reach 8700 feet in the Nilgiri mountains. Farther north, nearly in the same line with the western Gháts, the Aravali range, in which Mount Abu rises to 5600 feet, forms the western border of the table-land. The northern border cannot be sharply defined, it is broken up into hills which pass more or less gradually into the plains of the United Provinces.

<sup>1</sup> I take the following note from Sir Henry Yule: "A friend objects to this application of 'table land' to so rugged a region of inequalities. But it is a technical expression in geography, applicable to a considerable area, of which the lowest levels are at a considerable height above the sea"—*Glossary of Anglo-Indian Words*, Art. "Tibet."

The Vindhya and Satpura ranges, the highest points of which have an elevation of more than 4000 feet, run from west to east across the northern parts of the table-land of central India. "Now pierced by road and railway (says Sir William Hunter), they stood as a barrier of mountain and jungle between northern and southern India, and formed one of the main difficulties in welding the whole into an empire. They consist of vast masses of forests, ridges, and peaks, broken by cultivated tracts of the rich cotton-bearing black soil, exquisite river valleys, and high-lying grassy plains"<sup>1</sup>

Through two deep and almost parallel depressions in this tract, the waters of the Nerbada and Tapti flow westward to the Arabian Sea. With these exceptions, all the chief rivers of the peninsula, the Són, the Máhánadí, the Godáveri, the Kistna, and Kávari, flow eastward, and excepting the Són, which joins the Ganges, they all fall into the Bay of Bengal. The high ranges of the Gháts, on the western edge of the peninsula, throw off nearly the whole of its drainage to the eastward.

This table-land, with the low-lying tracts on its borders, comprises the British provinces of Madras and Bombay, the Central Provinces, and many of the chief native states of India. Among the latter are the Marátha states of Gwalior and Indore, and those of Haidarabad and Mysore.

There are other extensive countries that I have not named, lying outside the two great regions into which India proper may be roughly divided. On the north-eastern border of Bengal the British province of Assam, with an area of nearly 50,000 square

<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Empire*, 3rd edit., p. 68

miles,<sup>1</sup> and a population of more than 6,000,000, lies immediately below the *Himálaya*, and comprises the great and fertile valley of the *Bráhma-putra* after it issues from the mountains. On the opposite side of India, the North-West Frontier Province, formed in 1901 from districts transferred from the Punjab, and British Baluchistán farther south, are the outposts of our empire towards *Afghánistán*.

The French and Portuguese retain some small possessions, now little more than nominal signs of former greatness. The French possessions, of which the most important is Pondicherry, on the eastern coast, contain about 273,000 people, the Portuguese territory of Goa, on the western coast, has a population of nearly 500,000.

Lying on the east side of the Bay of Bengal is the great province of Burma, the latest addition to our Indian Empire. It is completely cut off by the sea or by mountains from India proper, and differs essentially in every respect from every Indian country. Including the protected *Shán* states, it has an area of more than 236,000 square miles, with a population of 10,500,000. Its frontiers, on the east, march with those of China, French Indo-China, and Siam.

Politically, Aden, at the entrance to the Red Sea, belongs also to the Indian Empire.

The provinces of British India, including Burma, cover more than 1,000,000 square miles, and contain 232,000,000 people. The native states cover nearly 700,000 square miles, with a population of 62,500,000.

Although the main natural features of India are comparatively simple, the differences between the climates and many of the physical conditions of its various

<sup>1</sup> [The province of Assam is now for administrative purposes united with the eastern and northern districts of Bengal. The reconstructed province is known as "Eastern Bengal and Assam."]

countries are, as I have already said, often far greater than any that exist between the various countries of Europe. The explanation of this fact is not difficult

Excepting in temperature, and in a rainfall the amount of which varies within no very wide limits, the general climatic conditions of the countries of Europe, excluding those in the extreme north, are not very different. On the other hand, it is hardly possible to imagine greater contrasts than those which often exist between the climates of various parts of India.

Take, for example, the two extremities of the great Indo-Gangetic plain—Sind on the western, and lower Bengal on the eastern side of India. These countries are almost in the same latitude, each of them is an unbroken alluvial plain, slightly elevated above the sea. In Sind, so little rain falls that the country may be said to be rainless. It is the Egypt of India, and without artificial irrigation would be an uninhabitable desert. Bengal, on the other hand, is a country of tropically heavy rain and luxuriant vegetation. The rainfall on the mountains along its eastern borders is heavier than any that has been observed in any other part of the world. At Cherra Punji, on the Khasiya hills, on the frontiers of eastern Bengal, the average yearly rainfall is between 500 and 600 inches, and 40 inches have been measured in a single day. The average annual rainfall of London is about 25 inches, a quantity less than that which not infrequently falls in twenty-four hours in many parts of India.

It is not difficult to imagine from this illustration, taken from two Indian provinces, how great must be the differences in physical conditions between countries presenting such extraordinary contrasts of climate.

The one characteristic, common at certain seasons

to the whole of India, except at great elevations, is excessive heat. The southern half of India, including nearly the whole of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, lies within the tropic. The northern half, including nearly the whole of the Indo-Gangetic plain, lies north of the tropic. Although in the southern or tropical region the mean temperature of the year is higher, the variations of temperature between summer and winter are comparatively small, and it is in the second region, in the plains north of the tropic, where the days are longer and the power of the sun more continuous, that Indian heat reaches in the summer months its greatest intensity. In parts of the Punjab and of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and in the desert on the borders of Sind, the temperature in May and June is probably exceeded in no part of the world, but this extreme heat brings by its own action the relief without which all life would perish.

"The dominant feature of Indian meteorology" (I am quoting from the late Mr. Blanford, formerly the head of the meteorological department in India) "is the alternation of the monsoons, the annual reversal of the prevailing wind-currents. This alternation is consequent on the fact that, in the early summer, the broad plains and table-lands of India are heated to a far higher temperature than the seas which bathe their shores, whereas, in the winter, the seas retain much of their warmth, while the land radiates away and throws off into stellar space much more heat than it receives from the oblique rays of the sun during the shorter winter days, and, especially as regards northern India, speedily cools down to a temperature much below that of the surrounding seas"<sup>1</sup>. Observations of these phenomena

<sup>1</sup> *Statistical Atlas of India*, chap. III.



and their consequences, especially in regard to the winds and the rainfall, show us, as Mr Blanford says, "how each season in succession affects in diverse modes the different portions of the country, why one province may sometimes be devastated by flood while another is parched with drought, and why, with special adaptation to the peculiarities of its own seasons and resources, each of them has its own agricultural system, its own staples, its own rotation of crops"

After March the heat in northern India rapidly increases. As the air above the heated earth becomes hotter, the pressure becomes less. At the same time an increase of pressure is going on over the ocean south of the equator, which has then its winter. Thus, a current of air laden with moisture is gradually established towards the continent of India from the sea. This is the so-called south-west monsoon, which brings the periodical rains every year to India, when the heat of the summer has reached its greatest intensity. Towards the end of May the monsoon has usually become established in the south-western extremity of India, and before the end of June it has extended to the greater part of the northern provinces.

The quantity of rain that falls in any part of India depends mainly on the configuration of the surface of the land, and on its situation with reference to the vapour-bearing winds. As the amount of watery vapour which air can hold in suspension varies with the temperature of the air, and increases with the temperature, any cause which cools the current from the sea leads to condensation of the vapour and to the fall of rain.

One of the chief of such causes is the existence of mountains which stand in the path of the winds, and force the vapour-bearing currents to rise over them.

Thus, the range of the western Gháts, which forms an almost continuous barrier along the western coasts of southern India, meets first the whole force of the monsoon as it comes saturated with moisture from the sea. A great condensation of rain is the immediate result of the fall in the temperature of the hot moist air as it is forced to rise in passing across the mountains. On the face of the Gháts, not far from Bombay, the annual rainfall in some places exceeds 250 inches, but a very large part of the moisture which the current of air contains is drained away by the excessive precipitation near the coast, and, as the current flows on over the land, the quantity of rain is greatly reduced. At Poona, only 60 miles from the sea, the annual rainfall is not more than 26 inches.

Similar phenomena are observed in a still more remarkable form on the *Himálaya*. The line of maximum elevation is not far from the southern edge of the great mountain mass. When the monsoon winds strike the outer ranges of the *Himálaya*, a large amount of rain immediately results; the quantity diminishes as the wind passes over the mountains, and when it reaches the regions of perpetual snow, about 100 miles from the plains of India, almost the whole of its remaining moisture is condensed. Thus, the periodical rains are completely stopped by the ranges of the southern face of the *Himálaya*; they can find no entrance to the mountains beyond, or to the table-land of Tibet, one of the driest and most arid regions of the world.

Similar causes shut off the rain-bearing south-westerly winds from the Madras provinces, on the south-eastern coast of India. These winds cannot carry much moisture over the obstacle to their course formed by the western Gháts, and little rain falls in

the eastern districts of Madras during the summer months But, as I shall presently notice, the remedy for this deficiency is not wanting

Where, on the other hand, the configuration of the land is such that no obstacles are offered to the passage of the monsoon current from the sea, there may be no condensation of its moisture Thus, when the wind strikes upon the coast of Sind, very slightly elevated above the sea, it finds a hotter and not a cooler surface than that which it has left, and it passes on with all its watery vapour for 1000 miles across the rainless plains to the Punjab, where at last the *Himálaya* converts the vapour into rain If, as Sir Richard St. *John* has observed, there had been a range of mountains connecting the high land of the Indian peninsula with that of Baluchistán, hardly a drop of rain would have reached the Punjab and the north of India

It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the manner in which geographical position and configuration determine the fall of rain in the various provinces of India, and even local conditions of a kind which might have seemed of little importance produce remarkable results Thus, for instance, a deep depression in a range of mountains may afford an opening for the entrance of the vapour-bearing currents of air, and give an ample supply of rain to a tract of country which would have been almost rainless if the mountains had been continuous In this manner, the valleys of the *Tapti* and *Narbada* rivers, which enter the sea north of Bombay, are gates through which the monsoon finds access to the provinces of central India, and makes them fertile and prosperous

As the sun travels southward after midsummer, the south-west monsoon passes gradually away, and

towards the end of September it ceases to blow over northern India. Causes acting in the converse direction, but similar to those which brought it with its rain-bearing currents, lead to its cessation. The temperature falls as the sun goes south, and the vast dry tracts of the Asiatic continent become rapidly colder, the barometric pressure over the land increases, and winds begin to blow from the north towards the south. These winds are the north-east monsoon.

This monsoon, although far less important than its predecessor to the greater part of India, is essentially necessary to Madras and the south-eastern provinces of the peninsula, which, as already explained, are cut off by their geographical position from the benefits of the monsoon from the south-west. When the wind from the north-east is established, these are the only parts of India which it reaches after passing across the sea, and, while everywhere else the current of air is dry, it takes up in its passage across the Bay of Bengal a supply of moisture. Under the operation of the same laws which give their rainy season in the summer to the other provinces, the moisture brought by the north-east wind from the sea is precipitated in rain on the eastern districts of Madras and southern India from October to December.

This slight sketch of some of the main facts of Indian meteorology may serve to illustrate the causes which render the physical conditions of various parts of India so extremely different. As Mr Blanford has observed, we may speak of the climates, but not of the climate of India. "The world itself (he says) affords no greater contrast than is to be met with, at one and the same time, within its limits." When these facts are understood, it will no longer seem surprising that India

and its inhabitants, its natural productions, and all the conditions of life, should present such contrasts and diversities

The following Table, taken from the "Statistical Abstract relating to British India," presented to Parliament 1910, gives the area and population of the British Provinces and Native States of India, according to the Census of 1901

PROVINCE OR STATE.	Area in square miles	Population.
<b>PROVINCES</b>		
1 Ajmer Merwara	2,711	476,912
2 Andamans and Nicobars	3,143	24,649
3 Baluchistán ( <i>Districts and Administered Territories</i> )	45,804	308,246
4 Bengal	115,819	50,722,067
5 Eastern Bengal and Assam	106,130	30,961,459
6 Bombay ( <i>Presidency</i> )	123,064	18,559,561
<i>Bombay</i>	(75,918)	(16,301,677)
<i>Sind</i>	(47,066)	(3,210,910)
<i>Aden</i>	(80)	(43,974)
7 Burma	236,738	10,490,624
8 Central Provinces and Berar	100,345	11,991,670
9 Coorg	1,582	180,607
10 Madras	141,726	38,209,436
11 North West Frontier Province	18,466	2,125,480
12 Punjab	97,209	20,330,339
13 United Provinces of Agra and Oudh	107,164	47,691,782
<i>Agra</i>	(83,298)	(34,858,705)
<i>Oudh</i>	(23,966)	(12,833,077)
Total, British Territory	1,097,901	232,072,832
<b>NATIVE STATES</b>		
14. Baluchistán	86,511	502,500
15 Baroda State	8,099	1,952,692
16 Bengal States	32,773	3,940,462
17 Bombay States	65,761	6,908,648
18 Central India States	78,772	8,628,781
19 Central Provinces States	31,188	1,681,140
20 Hyderabad State	82,698	11,141,142
21 Kashmir State	80,900	2,905,578
22 Madras States	9,989	4,188,086
23 Mysore State	29,444	5,539,399
24 Punjab States	36,532	4,424,398
25 Rajputána States	127,541	9,723,301
26 United Provinces States	5,079	802,097
Total, Native States	675,267	62,238,224
Grand Total, India	1,773,168	294,361,056

## NOTE

THE population table at page 32 is based on the returns of the Indian Census of 1901. Since the publication of this edition of the book, the provisional figures of the Census taken on March 10, 1911, have appeared. The population of India is now returned at 315 millions against 294 millions in 1901, an increase of 7 per cent. The population of British India is 244 millions against 232 millions in 1901, an increase of 5·4 per cent. The population of Native States is 71 millions nearly, against 62 millions in 1901, an increase of nearly 13 per cent. Of this increase, over 2 per cent is due to the inclusion of certain outlying tribal territory for the first time in the Census enumeration.

The great increase in the population of the Native States since 1901 is explicable by the fact that between 1891 and 1901 the population of the States, owing to drought, distress, and emigration, had actually declined by 5 per cent. The new Census registers the return of normal conditions. Nearly all the States show a considerable increase of population.

In British Provinces the population of the Punjab has declined by nearly 2 per cent, and that of the United Provinces by 1 per cent. These provinces have suffered of late years from plague and malaria. In the other provinces there have been substantial increases of population. The Central Provinces and Berar have an increase of 16 per cent, Burma of 14 per cent, Eastern Bengal and Assam of 11 per cent, Madras of 8 per cent.

The population returns for the several provinces and Native States according to the new Census are subjoined. They will serve for the correction of the figures given at pages 32, 347, 442, 500, and elsewhere in the body of the work.

# INDIA

PROVINCES		POPULATION (Census 1911)
1	Ajmer-Merwara	501,436
2	Andamas and Nicobars	26,447
3	Baluchistan ( <i>Districts and Administered Territories</i> )	438,016
4	Bengal	52,656,461
5	Eastern Bengal and Assam	33,978,307
6	Bombay ( <i>Presidency</i> )	19,664,546
	<i>Bombay</i>	(16,104,955)
	<i>Sind</i>	(3,513,732)
	<i>Aden</i>	(45,859)
7	Burma	12,057,905
8	Central Provinces and Berar	13,917,637
9	Coorg	175,004
10.	Madras	41,402,026
11	North-West Frontier Province ( <i>Districts and Administered Territories</i> )	2,199,029
12	Punjab	19,962,165
13	United Provinces of Agra and Oudh	47,193,392
	<i>Agra</i>	(34,631,658)
	<i>Oudh</i>	(12,561,734)
Total, British Territory		<u>244,172,371</u>
STATES AND AGENCIES		
14	Baluchistan ( <i>Agency Tracts</i> )	372,995
15	Baroda State	2,031,453
16	Bengal States	4,535,657
17	Eastern Bengal and Assam States	576,822
18	Bombay States	7,410,024
19	Central India Agency	9,365,165
20	Central Provinces States	2,117,406
21	Hyderabad State	13,375,469
22	Kashmir State	3,157,352
23	Madras States	4,813,644
24	Mysore State	5,806,796
25	North-West Frontier Province ( <i>Agencies and Tribal Areas</i> ) <sup>1</sup>	1,622,078
26	Punjab States	4,210,036
27	Rajputana Agency	10,514,111
28	Sikkim <sup>2</sup>	88,169
29	United Provinces States	831,751
Total, Native States		<u>70,828,728</u>
Grand Total, India		<u>315,001,099</u>

<sup>1</sup> Tribal areas brought for the first time under Census enumeration

<sup>2</sup> Was included in Bengal States in previous Census

## CHAPTER III

### THE HIMĀLAYA

The Himalaya—Its influence on India—Its geography—The great rivers of India—The story of the sources of the Ganges—British and Native Himalayan provinces—The Kumāon Himālaya—Scenery of the Himālaya

I HAVE referred in some detail to the regions into which India is divided, but there is a third region which has been barely mentioned, on and outside its borders, the influence of which over a great part of the Indian continent is so important that some knowledge of it is essential to a proper comprehension of Indian geography. I refer to the Himālaya. Without these mountains some of the richest tracts of India would be deserts, they give to India her principal rivers, and, through the effect that they produce on the monsoons and the rainfall, they affect all the conditions of life in the plains above which they rise. This is a subject on which books on India have usually not much to say.

It is unfortunate that we are taught to call these mountains the Himālaya, instead of giving them their more euphonious old Sanskrit name Himālāya, "the abode of snow." There are excellent general accounts of the Himālaya in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and in the fifth supplementary volume of that work, by Sir Richard Strachey and by Sir T H



Holdich respectively As Sir Richard Strachey has shown, the *Himálaya* is not a mountain chain in the ordinary acceptation of the term There stretches across a large part of Asia, immediately to the north of India, "a great protuberance above the general level of the earth's surface." We usually call the whole of its southern border by the name *Himálaya*, and its northern border, in a much less definite way, *Kuenlun*, and between them lies the mountainous table-land of Tibet, with an average elevation above the sea of 15,000 feet or more Neither the *Himálaya*, nor *Kuenlun*, nor the Tibetan table-land, have any special or separate existence, the whole constituting one huge agglomeration of mountains

A range of mountains like those to which we are accustomed in Europe gives no notion of the *Himálaya*. It extends from east to west for some 2000 miles, and the average distance from its southern to its northern edge exceeds 500 miles The *Himálaya*, thus defined, would stretch from England to the Caspian, and it covers 1,000,000 square miles, an area as large as that of Great Britain, and the German and Austrian Empires, France, Spain, and Italy all together Mountains like those of Europe have never been obstacles very difficult to pass, but except for a comparatively short distance on the north-western frontiers of India, where the mountains of *Afghánistán* and *Baluchistán* run southwards from the ranges of perpetual snow, the *Himálaya* and its offshoots form a barrier between India and the rest of Asia which for all practical purposes may be called impassable Except in the quarter that I have named, the *Himálaya* has in all ages given protection to India along a frontier 2000 miles in length But the exception has been a serious one

From this vulnerable side, in the course of the last eight hundred years, a swarm of invaders has five times come down upon India, sometimes to conquer, sometimes only to destroy

As might be supposed from its vast proportions, the *Himálaya* comprises many countries, differing from each other in almost everything except in this, that they consist entirely of mountains. We find in them every possible variety of climate, of vegetation, and of all natural products, and they are peopled by tribes of various character in most different stages of civilisation. The *Himálaya* offers a good illustration of the misleading generalisations which are common in regard to almost everything Indian. Some authorities tell us that the mountains between the plains of India and the regions of perpetual snow are bleak and bare and arid, and that their scenery, in spite of its stupendous scale, is uninteresting, others tell us that they are covered with forest and rich vegetation, and present, in the higher regions, scenes more beautiful and sublime than anything to be found in Europe. Both stories are true, but considering, as I have just said, that these mountains would stretch from England to the Caspian, we might as reasonably expect to find the same conditions in the Grampians, the Alps, and the Caucasus, as to find them everywhere in the *Himálaya*.

It is only with that portion of the *Himálaya* which rises immediately above the plains of northern India that I am now concerned. The highest peaks hitherto measured in the *Himálaya* or in the world are, for the most part, found on the southern side of the watershed between India and Tibet, at a distance of about 100 miles from the Indian plains. Mount Everest, in the eastern *Himálaya*, reaches more than 29,000 feet, many

of the peaks exceed 25,000, and still higher points may possibly remain to be discovered. On the north and north-west of Kashmir some of the peaks are hardly inferior to Mount Everest and the highest summits of the eastern portions of the chain. The elevation of the passes from India into Tibet is seldom less than 16,000 feet, and the average elevation of the watershed probably exceeds 18,000 feet. The table-land of Tibet is usually 15,000 or 16,000 feet above the sea.

I have already referred to the manner in which the lofty mountains that rise along the southern margin of the *Himálaya* form an impassable obstacle to the periodical rains of the south-west monsoon. The moisture-bearing currents cannot pass such a barrier, and all their vapour is condensed on the southern or Indian side of the chain. It is now well known that this furnishes the simple explanation of the fact formerly discussed by Humboldt and others, and long misunderstood, that the line of perpetual snow is lower on the southern than on the northern slopes of the *Himálaya*. Although on the latter, in Tibet, the winter cold is almost arctic in its intensity, very little snow will be found there in the summer even at 20,000 feet, because the air is so dry that snow can hardly form, while on the southern slopes of the chain the snow-line is found at an elevation of 15,000 or 16,000 feet.

The greatest rivers of India all come from the *Himálaya*. It is remarkable that, although their courses through India to the sea are so widely divergent, their chief sources are not far apart from each other, and are all on the northern or Tibetan side of the Indian watershed. They are in the high Tibetan plateau, near the lake of *Mánasarowar* and the peak of *Kailás*, names among the most sacred of Hindu mythology. This is

strictly true of the Indus, the Sutlej, and the Bráhma-putra, and, although the Ganges seems to be an exception, it can hardly be said to be one

The true story of the sources of the Ganges is curious. We all know how, in the eighteenth century, Bruce was supposed to have discovered the sources of the Nile, and how it afterwards appeared that he had been to the head, not of the great river, but of one of its tributaries. Something of the same sort may be said of the Ganges.

Almost every work on the geography of India still tells us that the Ganges has its origin in the glacier, or, as it is often and inaccurately called, the snow-bed of Gangotri, where it issues from the ice-cave, the 'cow's mouth' of the sacred books of the Hindus. The truth is that, apart from mythology and religion and common belief, and judging as we judge less holy streams, Gangotri has no claim to be called the source of the Ganges, designating by that name the river that issues from the mountains at Hardwár. The river which comes from Gangotri is the Bhágrathi, one of the numerous Himálayan feeders of the true Ganges. The main stream is that of the Alaknanda, which has a much longer course and, at all seasons of the year, a much larger body of water than the Bhágrathi, its most distant sources are on the southern side of the watershed, near the Niti and Mána passes into Tibet, and it collects the drainage of the peaks and glaciers of the Kumáon and Garhwál Himálaya, from Nanda Devi to the sacred shrines of Badrináth and Kedárnáth. These two streams unite about 40 miles above Hardwár. But the Ganges, applying that name, according to universal custom, to the combined river that flows through Bengal past Patna and Rájmahál, and thence on to the sea, has also, like the Indus, the Sutlej, and the Bráhma-putra, its trans-

**Himálayan sources** The Gogra, or more correctly the Ghágra, which joins the Ganges above Patna, about 500 miles from the sea, is hardly known to European fame, but in the upper portion of its course it is a much larger river than the Ganges. It rises on the north of the Indian Himálaya, not far from the sources of the other great rivers, near the lake of Mánasarowar, finds its way through the mountains of Nepál, under the name of Kauriáli, and flows on through Oudh until it joins the Ganges. The Kauriáli, near the borders of Nepál, after it has entered the plains, is said to have a minimum discharge of 11,000 cubic feet per second, whereas that of the Ganges at Hardwár is only 6300 feet. Whether at the junction between the Ganges and the Gogra, the former, after its longer course through the plains of India, has become the larger stream, is a question to which no certain answer has hitherto been given. It may seem curious that it should still be possible to doubt whether the Gogra can properly be called an affluent of the Ganges, or whether it ought not rather to be held that the Ganges, in its passage from the mountains to the sea, falls into a river greater than itself, the very name of which is hardly known in Europe. The question has no material importance, and the truth is that no standard has hitherto been clearly recognised by which to determine the characters that justify us in speaking of any particular affluent of a river as its source. It remains undecided whether that term should be applied to the affluent which has the longest course, which has the greatest catchment area, or which has the superior volume, and, if volume be the test, whether this is to be measured where the stream is at its highest, its lowest, or its average level.

Like the rivers that I have named, the Irawadí and

the Salwin, the great rivers of Burma, have also their main sources on the northern or Tibetan side of the *Himálaya*

Between Assam, the British province on the extreme north-east of India, and the western frontiers of Kashmir, a distance of 1500 miles, the countries of the Indian *Himálaya* and its offshoots cover more than 150,000 square miles, and contain some 6,500,000 people. They are mostly under native rule, and among them the most important is *Nepál*, the one state in India, or on its borders, which has remained entirely independent of our power. In 1815 and 1816 the Nepalese measured their strength against ours, and lost in consequence *Kumáon* and *Garhwál*, their richest districts. Since that time they have preserved an unvarying policy of absolute but thoroughly friendly isolation. The British representative at *Kátmádu*, their capital, is treated almost as a highly honoured prisoner, and central Africa is more accessible to European travellers than the greater part of *Nepál*. However unenlightened from our point of view this policy, which the geographical position and configuration of the country alone rendered possible, may have been, it has had the result of shutting out all causes and opportunities of dispute, and of preserving the independence of *Nepál*. The other native hill states are all under British control. The most important of them is Kashmir, with its dependencies in western Tibet. I have spoken of the great differences between the various countries and peoples of these mountains. A remarkable illustration is seen in the contrast between the states on the eastern and western extremities of the Indian *Himálaya*. There are no braver soldiers than the little Gurkhas of *Nepál*, and few greater cowards than the stalwart Muhamadans of Kashmir.

In the western *Himálaya*, in the Punjab Lieutenant-Governorship, several districts, of which *Kángra* is the most important, are under British administration, and in one of them, a small patch surrounded by native states, is *Simla*, the summer headquarters of the Government of India. But the most considerable tract of British territory in the *Himálaya* is the group of districts forming the *Kumáon* division, which borders on the plains of *Rohilkhand*, in the *Agra* Province.

It would be foreign to my purpose to speak at length regarding this or any other portion of the chain, and, as I have just said, in treating of so vast a subject as the *Himálaya* it is easy to be misled by generalisations. I will, however, say something about *Kumáon*, because in its main features it affords instructive illustrations of many of the chief and most widely prevailing characteristics of these mountains, and because it is a country with which I have had unusual opportunities of making myself acquainted.

The *Kumáon* division has an area of more than 12,000 square miles, and its population exceeds a million. Its whole surface is covered by mountains. They rise with strange suddenness from the plains of India. We pass almost in a moment into the mountains, and when we have once entered them, we hardly find level ground again until we have gone 400 or 500 miles across the *Himálaya*, *Tibet*, and the *Kuenlun*. The *Gágar* range, described with enthusiastic admiration by Bishop Heber, rises immediately above the plains to more than 8000 feet, and in one of its valleys lie the little lake and station of *Naini Tál*, the summer headquarters of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces of *Agra* and *Oudh*.

After travelling through *Kumáon* for more than

100 miles, through a constant succession of high ranges and deep gorges, we pass the great peaks of the Indian Himálaya, and cross over into Tibet, but, looking northward from the watershed, we see again fresh snowy ranges and mountains that look as endless and as vast as those that we have left behind

In the earlier part of my Indian life I had the good fortune to be employed for about ten years in various offices in Kumáon, and I spent many summers in the higher regions of the Himálaya, sometimes among the almost countless glaciers at the sources of the Ganges and its tributaries, or visiting the passes into Tibet, one of them more than 18,000 feet above the sea, or on the forest-covered ranges immediately under the snowy peaks. I have seen much of European mountains, but in stupendous sublimity, combined with a magnificent and luxuriant beauty, I have seen nothing that can be compared with the Himálaya.

Although none of the Kumáon summits reach an elevation equal to that attained by a few of the peaks in other parts of the chain, for only two of them exceed 25,000 feet, it is probable that the average elevation of the snowy range of Kumáon is nowhere surpassed. For a continuous distance of some 200 miles the peaks constantly reach a height of from 22,000 to more than 25,000 feet.

The alpine vegetation of the Kumáon Himálaya, while far more various, closely resembles in its generic forms that of the alpine regions of Europe, but after we have left the plains for 100 miles and have almost reached the foot of the great peaks, the valleys are still, in many cases, only 2000 or 3000 feet above the sea, conveying, as Sir Richard Strachey says, "the heat and vegetation of the tropics among ranges covered with



perpetual snow " Thus, he adds, the traveller may obtain at a glance a range of vision extending from 2000 to 25,000 feet, " and see spread before him a compendium of the entire vegetation of the globe from the tropics to the poles " Something similar may be said of the animal world Tigers, for instance, are common in the valleys, and it is not very unusual to see their foot-prints in the snow among oaks and pines and rhododendrons 8000 or 10,000 feet above the sea.

If I wished to give to any one, acquainted only with European mountains, some notion of the scenery of the Kumáon Himálaya, at elevations of about 6000 to 10,000 feet, I should advise him to travel in the Italian valleys of the Alps, to which, on a far greater scale, the gorges of the Himálaya have often a stronger resemblance than those of Switzerland. The Val Anzasca, as we go up towards Macugnaga through the chestnut woods, with Monte Rosa always before us, is not unlike in miniature a valley in the Himálaya, and I hardly like to say that it is less beautiful. But the Indian mountains are grander, their forests are nobler, their whole vegetation is more rich and varied, and nowhere in Europe can we find the splendour of the atmospheric effects and colouring of the Himálaya.

Still less is comparison possible in the higher regions of the mountains. To the traveller who remembers the wild magnificence of the peaks and glaciers of the Himálaya, and the general sublimity of its aspect, Zermatt and Chamouny seem insignificant. The mere fact that the ranges of the Himálaya are often twice as high as those of the Alps gives no idea of their relative magnitude. The whole of the Bernese Alps might, it has been said, be cast into a single Himálayan valley. We might almost as reasonably, when the Scottish or

Welsh hills are white with snow, compare them with Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa, as compare anything in the Alps with Nanda Devi and Trisúl. If, preserving the form of its great obelisk, we could pile the Matterhorn on the Jungfrau, we should not reach the highest summits of the Himálaya, and should have a mountain less wonderful than the astonishing peak of Dunagiri.

Among earthly spectacles, it is hardly possible that any can surpass the Himálaya, as I have often seen it at sunset on an evening in October from the ranges thirty or forty miles from the great peaks. "For the picturesque beauty of its natural setting" (Sir Thomas Holdich writes), "in the midst of tropical mountain scenery, no less than for grandeur of outline and profound impression of majestic predominance, there is probably no rival in the world to Kanchinjunga as seen from Darjiling." One other such view, that from Binsar in Kumáon, stands out vividly in my own remembrance. This mountain is 8000 feet high, covered with oak and rhododendron. Towards the north we look down over pine-clad slopes into a deep valley, where, 6000 feet below, the Sarju runs through a tropical forest. Beyond the river it seems to the eye as if the peaks of perpetual snow rose straight up and almost close to us into the sky. From the bottom of the valley to the top of Nanda Devi we see at a glance almost 24,000 feet of mountain. The stupendous golden or rose-coloured masses and pinnacles of the snowy range extend before us in unbroken succession for more than 250 miles, filling up a third part of the visible horizon, while on all other sides, as far as the eye can reach, stretch away the red and purple ranges of the lower mountains. "In a hundred ages of the gods," writes one of the

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old Sanskrit poets, "I could not tell you of the glories of Himáchal "

I must add that few of those who spend the summer in the hill stations of northern India have the opportunity of witnessing such scenes as these. If they suppose, at a place like Simla, that they have seen the Himálaya, they greatly deceive themselves

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT IN INDIA

Presidencies and provinces—The Presidency of Bengal—First constitution of the Government—Hastings and his Council—Changes between 1773 and 1833—The Governor-General of India in Council—Separation of the North-Western Provinces from Bengal—Renewal of the Charter in 1853—A Lieutenant Governor appointed for Bengal—The mutiny of the Native army—Transfer of the government to the Crown—The existing constitution of the Supreme and Provincial Governments—The Indian legislatures—The Provincial Governments—Former cumbrous mode of transacting business—Changes made by Lord Canning—Reforms completed by Lord Lawrence—The Council converted into a Cabinet—Manner of transacting business—Power of Governor-General to overrule the Council—Migration of the Government to Simla—Relations between Supreme and Provincial Governments—Mr Bright on the government of India—Decentralisation

IN the earlier times of the East India Company, the affairs of the three principal settlements in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay were, in each case, administered by a President and a Council composed of servants of the Company, and the term ‘presidency’ was applied to the whole tract over which their authority extended. The term has lasted to the present day, and is still used in official papers, but it has almost ceased to have any special meaning. British India is not divided into presidencies, but into provinces, nine of which are extensive countries under separate Governments. The

presidencies of Madras and Bombay are now the provinces of the same names

The term 'presidency of Bengal' requires some explanation

The name Bengal has had, at different periods since the country came into our possession, very different meanings. It was originally applied, as it still is by the natives of India, to the tract sometimes called lower Bengal, including the deltas of the Ganges and Bráhmáputra, and inhabited by the people who speak Bengálí. The earliest factories and settlements on that side of India were established in Bengal, and, as British authority went on extending, the name Bengal was applied to all the territories administered from Fort William, the official headquarters in Calcutta. Thus, the presidency of Bengal, or, according to its proper official designation, Fort William in Bengal, came to include not only Bengal and the neighbouring provinces of Behár and Orissa, but the whole of the British conquests in northern India. Some remnants of the old system have lasted into our own times. There was, until 1894, a single army for the provinces of Bengal, Agra and Oudh, and the Punjab, and although, as I shall have again to notice, it had not a single native of Bengal in its ranks, it retained the name of the Bengal Army. This name still survives, for although the Army in the Punjab is now a separate body, the other provinces remain included in the so-called Bengal Command.<sup>1</sup> Another survival from old times is seen in the Bengal Civil Service. The members of the Indian Civil Service, recruited under the system of open competition, are

<sup>1</sup> [This was the case up to 1905 when the Army in India was reorganised. The old 'army commands' disappeared, and in their place a system of 'divisional commands' was adopted, the divisions being grouped into two 'armies'—the northern army and the southern army.]

appointed, before they leave England, to the provinces to which under ordinary circumstances they remain permanently attached. The civil service cadres of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and of the Punjab are, for all administrative purposes, as distinct from that of Bengal as from those of Madras and Bombay, but, in regard to some matters connected with annuities to widows and children, the members are still treated as a single body and included in the so-called Bengal Civil Service.

The first Act of Parliament which prescribed a definite system of government for the affairs of India was that of 1773<sup>1</sup>. It provided for the appointment of a Governor-General and a Council of four members for the Presidency of Bengal. The administration was to be carried on in accordance with the votes of the majority of the Council, and the Governor-General had no power to set aside their decisions. Certain powers of control, vaguely defined, were given to the Government of Bengal over the presidencies of Madras and Bombay. Warren Hastings was the first Governor-General of Bengal. The scandalous dissensions in his Council, under the malignant influence of Francis, have become a well-known matter of history. They showed that government by the constantly shifting majority of a Council was impossible, but although similar facts repeatedly occurred to illustrate the folly of such a system, it was not until 1786 that a partial remedy was applied, after Lord Cornwallis had made it a condition of his acceptance of the office of Governor-General that the power of overruling his Council should be given to him. On the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1793,<sup>2</sup> the powers of the Governor-General were further extended,

<sup>1</sup> Regulating Act, 13 Geo III c. 83

<sup>2</sup> 33 Geo III c. 52.

authority to overrule then Councils was given to the Governors of Madras and Bombay, the power of the Governments of those presidencies to make laws and regulations for their own territories was recognised, and the supreme authority of the Governor-General in Council over the whole of India was distinctly declared. No very important changes in the constitution of the Government were made after this until the renewal of the Charter in 1833,<sup>1</sup> when the trading powers of the Company ceased. The Governor-General in Council of Bengal then became the Governor-General of India in Council. Bengal was to be divided into two presidencies, Fort William in Bengal and Agra. The Governor-General was to be Governor of the former, and a Governor was to be appointed for the latter. The Agra presidency was not constituted, but by an amending Act passed in 1835<sup>2</sup> the territories which were to have been included in it were placed, under the name of the North-Western Provinces, under a Lieutenant-Governor without a Council. Madras and Bombay retained their Councils, but no Council was appointed for Bengal.

The Punjab became a Lieutenant-Governorship in 1859, and Burma in 1897. In 1901 a new province, the North-West Frontier Province, was formed, and, to avoid confusion from the similarity of names, the North-Western Provinces, with which Oudh had been included, became the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. In 1905 the provinces of Bengal and Assam were reconstructed, the eastern and northern districts of Bengal being detached from that province and formed with Assam into the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

In 1853 the Charter of the Company was again

<sup>1</sup> 3 & 4 Will. IV c 85

<sup>2</sup> 5 & 6 Will. IV c 52

renewed,<sup>1</sup> and an important change in the Government was made. It had long been obvious that it was impossible for a single person to discharge the double duty of Governor-General of India and Governor of Bengal, and the administration of Bengal had notoriously become less efficient than that of any other province in India. The Governor-General was relieved from this charge, and a Lieutenant-Governor, without a Council, was appointed.

In 1857 came the mutiny of the Bengal Native army.

In the following year, by the "Act for the better government of India,"<sup>2</sup> the government was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown, and it was provided that all the powers of the Company and of the Board of Control should be exercised by a Secretary of State, in concert, in certain cases, with a Council. This Act, of which I shall again have to speak, applied almost solely to the Government in England, and the Government in India was carried on as before.

In 1861 important changes were made in the constitution both of the supreme and provincial Governments in India. The Indian Councils Act<sup>3</sup> of that year still regulates, except so far as it has been modified by later Acts of Parliament, the government of India. In 1892 it was materially modified by another Indian Councils Act,<sup>4</sup> which enlarged the Legislative Councils and increased their powers, and in 1909 another Indian Councils Act<sup>5</sup> made important changes in the constitution and functions of these councils, and gave power to make changes in the executive governments of the provinces.

The principal provisions of the Act of 1861, as

<sup>1</sup> 16 & 17 Vict. c. 95

<sup>2</sup> 24 & 25 Vict. c. 67

<sup>4</sup> 55 & 56 Vict. c. 14

<sup>2</sup> 21 & 22 Vict. c. 106

<sup>5</sup> 9 Edw. VII c. 4



modified by subsequent legislation, will now be described

The Governor-General and the 'ordinary' members of his Council are appointed by the Crown. No limit of time is specified for their tenure of office, but custom, not often disregarded, has fixed it at five years. The term 'Viceroy' has been commonly applied to the Governor-General since the transfer of the government to the Crown, but it is not recognised by law. It was first used in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, which announced the assumption of the government of India by the Crown, and in doing so referred to Lord Canning as the 'first Viceroy and Governor-General'. There are six 'ordinary' members of Council. Three of the members must at the time of their appointment have been at least ten years in the service of the Crown in India. One of the three remaining members must be a barrister, or a member of the faculty of advocates in Scotland, of not less than five years' standing. The qualifications of the fifth and sixth members are not prescribed by statute. The Council, as at present (1910) constituted, consists of three Indian civilians, a native of India having the legal qualification, and two members who before appointment to the Council held posts in the English civil service. The Indian civilians hold respectively the portfolios of the Land Revenue and Agriculture, the Home, and the Education departments. The law member has charge of the Legislative department. The two members with English official experience have charge respectively of the Finance department and of the Commerce and Industry department. The Commander-in-Chief in India may also be, and in practice always is, an 'extraordinary' member of the Council. He holds charge of the Army

department The Governors of Madras and Bombay become 'extraordinary' members if the Council meets within their presidencies Whenever it is declared by the Governor-General in Council to be expedient that the Governor-General should visit any part of India without his Council, he may nominate one of the members of his Council to be President of the Council The President, during the absence of the Governor-General, exercises the powers which the Governor-General may exercise at meetings of the Council, except that of assenting to or withholding assent to laws, and the Governor-General, when so absent, may himself exercise all or any of the powers which he might exercise as Governor-General in Council, except the power of making laws The Council may assemble at any place in India which the Governor-General in Council appoints

The Governor-General's Council, as described above, is commonly designated the 'Executive Council,' to distinguish it from the 'Legislative Council' It is in effect a cabinet of ministers who, with the Governor-General at their head, conduct the executive administration of the country The Legislative Council of the Governor-General is an expansion of this Council The Indian Councils Act of 1861 provided that for the better exercise of the power of making laws and regulations vested in the Governor-General in Council he should nominate 'additional members' for the purpose of legislation only The Additional members were appointed for two years, but joined the Council only when it met for legislative purposes The Council, thus reinforced and while thus engaged, could entertain no matters except those directly connected with the legislative business before it The number of Additional

members was fixed by the Act of 1861 at twelve as a maximum, of whom not less than one-half were to be non-officials, *i.e.* not holding offices under the Government. In practice most of the non-officials were always natives of India. The Lieutenant-Governor of the province in which the Legislative Council might meet was also made an Additional member. A Government majority was secured by the presence in the Legislative Council of the members of the Executive Council.

The Act of 1861 constituted similar Legislative Councils, by expansion of the Governor's Executive Council, in Madras and Bombay, and gave power to create Legislative Councils in Bengal and in any other province under a Lieutenant-Governor. These provincial legislatures will be referred to later on.

The Act of 1892 made important changes in the constitution and powers of the Legislative Councils. It had become apparent that the administration might gain much advantage if public opinion could be brought more largely to bear on it. This was especially true of the provincial Governments, the ordinary business of which is of a kind in which local knowledge is necessary, and on which the expression of intelligent independent criticism may often be valuable. The Indian Councils Act of 1892 raised the number of Additional members in the Governor-General's Council to sixteen as a maximum, and introduced the representative principle in the appointment of the members. The method of appointment was, as before, nomination by the Governor-General. But the regulations made under the Act provided that a certain number of the nominations would be made on the recommendation of specified persons, bodies and associations, the intention being to give a representative character to the persons so

nominated There was no obligation to accept the recommendation, but in practice it was never refused Of the sixteen Additional members six were usually officials and ten non-officials Four of the latter were appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendations of the four provincial Legislative Councils, the non-official members of each such Council being the electors A fifth member was recommended by the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce The remaining five non-official members were appointed by the Governor-General as appeared to him most suitable with reference to pending legislative business and to the due representation of the different classes of the community

The powers of the Governor-General's Legislative Council were also enlarged The Act of 1861 had strictly confined the business of the Council to the consideration and enactment of legislative measures There was thus no opportunity for criticising the financial policy of the Government except on those occasions when financial legislation was necessary The Act of 1892 introduced non-legislative functions by empowering the Governor-General to make rules authorising the discussion of the annual financial statement, provided that no resolutions might be moved or divisions taken Under this power one or two days were allotted annually to its discussion, though as the estimates had already been finally settled by the executive Government and could not be disturbed, the debates were apt to be discursive and ineffective The powers of the Legislative Council in non-legislative business were further enlarged by the right to ask questions on matters of general public interest being conceded to members, under certain conditions and restrictions This right has been freely exercised

The Indian Councils Act of 1892 also reconstituted the provincial legislatures on similar lines, and gave them non-legislative functions

Important changes in the constitution and functions of the Governor-General's Legislative Council and of the provincial legislatures have recently been made by the Indian Councils Act of 1909. The Councils have been greatly enlarged, their non-legislative functions extended, and a certain number of the members are elected by constituencies. The Legislative Council of the Governor-General now comprises 60 Additional members, of whom 35 are nominated by the Governor-General and 25 are elected by specified electorates. Of the nominated members not more than 28 may be officials, and three others (who must not be officials) must be nominated from among the Muhammadans of the Punjab, the landholders of that province, and the Indian commercial community respectively. These are three instances of class interests in which it has not been found possible to devise satisfactory electorates. The remaining four nominated seats are at the Governor-General's disposal, to secure experts on special subjects or representatives of minor interests and particular classes. Of the 25 elected members eleven are elected by the non-official members of the several provincial legislatures, two being assigned to each of the four largest provinces, and one to each of three other provinces. A twelfth is elected by the district and municipal boards of the Central Provinces, that province not having a Legislative Council. Six members are elected by electorates of the landholders in six provinces, five by the Muhammadan community in each of five provinces, and two by the Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta and Bombay. In this way

different classes and interests have been given a measure of representation roughly corresponding with their magnitude and importance. In constituting the electorates and in regulating their procedure in elections it has been necessary to adopt a variety of methods, all of which may be regarded as experimental and some of which are avowedly temporary and provisional. The regulations also define the qualifications of candidates and of voters. In a Muhammadan electorate, for instance, the candidates must be Muhammadans, and in a landholders' electorate landholders. The Governor-General in Council has the exceptional power of excluding a candidate whose reputation and antecedents are such that his election would be contrary to the public interest. An oath or affirmation of loyalty to the Crown is required of every member before he takes his seat. Members hold their seats for three years, and every three years there is a general election for the Council. In settling the distribution of seats the representation of the Muhammadan community presented great difficulties. In the end five elected seats were assigned to special Muhammadan electorates, and one nominated seat is reserved for a representative of that community in the Punjab. As Muhammadans may reasonably hope to secure two or three other seats in the Council, they will usually have eight or nine members in all. This number represents a percentage of the total number of non-official seats somewhat in excess of the percentage of the Muhammadan population of India to the total population.

The non-legislative functions of the Governor-General's Legislative Council, as now settled by the Act of 1909 and the rules made under it, are these. There is first the annual discussion of the budget. This now

extends over several days, it takes place before the budget is finally settled, and members have the right to propose resolutions and to divide the Council upon them. On the appointed day the preliminary estimates are presented by the Finance member to the Council with an explanatory memorandum. On a subsequent day he makes such further explanations as he thinks necessary. Members may thereupon move any resolution of which they may have given notice, regarding any proposed alteration in taxation, any proposed loan, or any additional grant to local Governments. When these resolutions have been disposed of, the estimates are taken by groups, and members may move resolutions on any heads of revenue or expenditure that under the rules are open to discussion. Certain heads of revenue and of expenditure, as, for instance, the *Customs* and the *Army*, are excluded from discussion. The next stage is the presentation of the budget, as finally settled by the Finance member, who describes the changes made and explains, if necessary, why any resolution passed in Council has not been accepted. In a final sitting a general discussion of the budget takes place, at which no resolution may be moved or vote taken. It may be mentioned that a resolution of the Council, if carried, "has effect only as a recommendation to the Governor-General in Council." The Government is not bound to act upon it. In the Legislative Council the Government has an official majority, as including the members of the Executive Council there are 35 officials against 32 non-officials.

Apart from the opportunity for discussing matters of general public interest which the annual debate on the budget provides, they may now be discussed and made the subject of resolutions at any sitting of the

Legislative Council This is a new power To the right of interpellation possessed by the Council since 1892 has now been added the right to ask 'supplementary' questions, for the purpose of elucidating a reply given to the original question

The conditions under which questions may be asked in the Council are defined by rules The questions, of which due notice has to be given, must be requests for information only, and must not be put in argumentative, or hypothetical, or defamatory language, nor is discussion permitted in respect of an answer given to a question on behalf of the Government These two restrictions are substantially identical with those in force in the British House of Commons The President may disallow any question which, in his opinion, cannot be answered consistently with the public interests

As regards legislation, the functions of the Governor-General's Legislative Council are still regulated by the Councils Act of 1861 Certain Acts of Parliament under which the Government of India is constituted cannot be touched, and no law can be made affecting the authority of Parliament or allegiance to the Crown, but with these exceptions the legislative powers of the Governor-General in Council over the whole of British India are unrestricted Measures affecting the public debt or revenues of India, the religion of any of His Majesty's subjects, the discipline or maintenance of the military or naval forces, and the relations of the Government with foreign states, cannot be introduced by any member without the previous sanction of the Governor-General Every Act requires the Governor-General's assent The assent of the Crown is not necessary to the validity of an Act, but the Crown can disallow any Act that has been passed



Apart from these ordinary legislative powers, the Governor-General in Council was authorised in 1870<sup>1</sup> to make, without calling in the Additional members, 'regulations' having the force of law for the less advanced parts of the country, where a system of administration simpler than that in force elsewhere is desirable. The effect of this was to put on a legal basis the administration of the so-called 'non-regulation provinces.'

Further, in cases of urgent necessity, the Governor-General can, on his own authority and without reference to his Council, make Ordinances which have the force of law for six months. This power was given by the Act of 1861 for the first time. It has seldom been exercised, and only for reasons of temporary convenience.

The constitution of the executive Governments in Madras and Bombay was not altered by the Act of 1861, and they still retain some signs of their former dignity and partial independence. On certain matters they correspond directly with the Secretary of State, a privilege not possessed by other provincial Governments. The Governor and the members of his Executive Council are appointed by the Crown. The Governor is usually an English statesman sent from England. Until 1893 the Executive Council in either Presidency consisted of two members of the Indian Civil Service and the Commander-in-Chief in the Presidency. But in that year, as will be mentioned in describing the constitution of the Army in India, the offices of Presidential Commanders-in-Chief were abolished. From 1893 to 1909 two civilian members composed the Council. The Indian Councils Act of 1909, which reconstituted the supreme and provincial Legislative Councils, increased the

<sup>1</sup> 33 Vict. c. 3, sec. 1

Executive Councils of Madras and Bombay to four members as a maximum, of whom two at least must be persons who have been for twelve years in the service of the Crown in India. In exercise of this power a native of India has now been appointed to the Council in either Presidency.

The changes made in the constitution and non-legislative functions of the Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay by the Act of 1909 are very similar to those which have been described in speaking of the supreme Legislative Council. The number of members has been more than doubled, a system of election by specially constituted electorates introduced, and powers given to the members to debate and move resolutions on the provincial financial statement, to move resolutions on matters of general public interest at any meeting of the Council, and to ask 'supplementary' questions. The system under which the Additional members are nominated and elected is so nearly identical in the two presidencies, that it will be sufficient to describe that in force in Bombay. The Bombay Legislative Council is composed of 4 *ex-officio* members (i.e. the three members of the Executive Council and the Advocate-General), and 44 Additional members. Of the Additional members the Governor nominates 23 (of whom not more than 14 may be officials), and 21 are elected. The Government is thus without an official majority in the Council. Of the elected members, 8 are elected by groups of municipalities and district boards, 4 by Muhammadan electorates, and 3 by electorates of the landholding classes. The Bombay University, the Bombay municipal corporation, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, the Karachi Chamber of Commerce, the Mill-owners'

Association, and the Indian commercial community, each elect one member. The regulations for the formation of electorates, and as to the qualifications and disqualifications of candidates and voters, are similar to those made in the case of the supreme Council.

The rules for the discussion of the annual financial statement in the Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay are similar to those applicable to the supreme Council, except that the discussion must be limited to those branches of revenue and expenditure which are under the control of the local Government. The financial statement is first presented and considered as a whole and then in detail, and resolutions may be moved and divisions taken. The Government is not bound by any resolutions which the Council may pass. At any meeting of the Legislative Council matters of general public interest under the control of the local Government may be discussed and made the subject of resolutions. Questions cannot be asked or answered as to any matters other than those under the control of the local Government, and in matters which are or have been the subject of controversy between the local Government and the Government of India or the Secretary of State, no question can be asked or answer given except as to facts.

Laws passed by these Legislative Councils require the sanction of the Governor-General, and may be disallowed by the Crown. The powers of the Governor-General in Council to legislate for all matters throughout India are not impaired by the existence of a local legislature, but, as a general rule, the latter is left to deal with subjects of provincial interest. The local legislature may not make any law affecting an Act of

Parliament, nor, except with the previous sanction of the Governor-General, may it take into consideration any measure affecting the public debt, customs, imperial taxation, currency, the post office and telegraph, the penal code, religion, the military and naval forces, patents, copyright, or relations with foreign powers

In the other great provinces the executive governments are differently constituted from those of Madras and Bombay Bengal, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the Punjab, Burma, and Eastern Bengal and Assam are administered by Lieutenant-Governors, they must be chosen from officers in the service of the Crown who have served in India for at least ten years, they are appointed by the Governor-General with the approval of the Crown, and with one exception they have always been members of the Indian Civil Service<sup>1</sup> Until lately no Lieutenant-Governor had an Executive Council, but in 1909 the Indian Councils Act of that year gave power to create such a Council in Bengal and in any other province under a Lieutenant-Governor This power has now been exercised as regards Bengal The Executive Council in Bengal is constituted of three members, of whom two are members of the Indian Civil Service, and one is a native of India

In each province under a Lieutenant-Governor a provincial Legislative Council similar to the Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay has been established in exercise of a power given to the Governor-General in Council by the Indian Councils Act of 1861 These provincial legislatures were enlarged by the Indian Councils Act of 1892, and they have been lately re-constituted and their non-legislative functions increased by the Act of 1909 In constitution, in functions, and

<sup>1</sup> 5 & 6 Will IV c 52, sec. 2, and 16 & 17 Vict. c. 95, sec. 16

in the system of special electorates, they resemble in all essential particulars the Legislative Council of Bombay, of which a detailed account has been given. The Bengal Legislative Council, for instance, consists of 53 members. Of these, 3 are *ex-officio* members, being the members of the Executive Council, 24 are nominated, of whom not more than 19 may be officials, and 26 are elected by specially constituted electorates. The Legislative Council of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh is nearly as large as the Bengal Council. The Punjab Council comprises 26 members. The Burma Council is the smallest, containing only 18 members. In all these provincial legislatures an official majority has been dispensed with, though it has been maintained in the Governor-General's Council. Refusal by the provincial councils to pass necessary legislation may be met by exercise of the power vested in the Governor-General to legislate for any part of India, while undesirable legislation may be checked by the power of veto reserved to the head of the Government.

There remain to be noticed two minor provinces—the Central Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province—which are administered by Chief Commissioners. Except in name and dignity and in amount of salary and patronage there is no great difference between a Chief Commissioner and a Lieutenant-Governor. These provinces have not a Legislative Council, and laws are enacted for them in the Governor-General's Council.

We may now speak of the manner in which the executive business of the Governor-General in Council is transacted. The system is very different from that in force under the Government of the East India

Company Although after the Act of 1793 the power of the Governor-General to overrule his Council was not open to question, the fundamental idea, on which previous legislation had been based, still remained, that the government was to be carried on by the Governor-General in concert with the whole Council All public business of every kind, however trivial, was supposed to come before all the members of the Council Questions were ordinarily decided by the majority, the Governor-General having a casting vote if the votes were equal If the Governor-General determined to overrule the majority, it was provided that he and the members of Council should "mutually exchange with and communicate in writing to each other the grounds and reasons of their respective opinions" They were then to meet a second time, and if both parties retained their first opinions, their minutes were to be entered on the consultations, and the orders of the Governor-General were to be carried out

In his *Essay on Representative Government*, published in 1861, when the procedure which I have described was still legally in force, Mr J S Mill described the manner in which he considered that ministers in charge of the great departments of an executive government ought to be assisted by Councils —

"The Councils should be consultative merely, in this sense that the ultimate decision should rest undividedly with the Minister himself but neither ought they to be looked upon, or to look upon themselves as ciphers, or as capable of being reduced to such at his pleasure The advisers attached to a powerful and perhaps self-willed man ought to be placed under conditions which make it impossible for them, without discredit, not to express an opinion, and impossible for him not to listen to and consider their recommendations, whether he adopts them or not The relation which ought to exist between a chief and this description of

advisers is very accurately hit by the constitution of the Governor General and those of the different presidencies in India. These Councils are composed of persons who have professional knowledge of Indian affairs, which the Governor General and Governors usually lack, and which it would not be desirable to require of them. As a rule, every member of Council is expected to give an opinion, which is, of course, very often a simple acquiescence, but if there is a difference of sentiment, it is at the option of every member, and is the invariable practice, to record the reasons of his opinion, the Governor General or Governor doing the same. In ordinary cases the decision is according to the sense of the majority, the Council, therefore, has a substantial part in the Government, but if the Governor General or Governor thinks fit, he may set aside even their unanimous opinion, recording his reasons. The result is that the chief is, individually and effectually, responsible for every act of the Government. The members of Council have only the responsibility of advisers, but it is always known, from documents capable of being produced, and which, if called for by Parliament or public opinion, always are produced, what each has advised, and what reasons he gave for his advice, while from their dignified position and ostensible participation in all acts of government, they have nearly as strong motives to apply themselves to the public business, and to form and express a well considered opinion on every part of it, as if the whole responsibility rested with themselves."

I must continue my quotation, for Mr Mill's commentary on the system thus described is remarkable —

"This mode of conducting the highest class of administrative business is one of the most successful instances of the adaptation of means to ends which political history, not hitherto very prolific in works of skill and contrivance, has yet to show. It is one of the acquisitions with which the art of politics has been enriched by the experience of the East India Company's rule, and like most of the other wise contrivances by which India has been preserved to this country, and an amount of good government produced which is truly wonderful considering the circumstances and the materials, it is probably destined to perish in the general holocaust which the traditions of Indian government seem fated

to undergo, since they have been placed at the mercy of public ignorance and the presumptuous vanity of political men "

Mr Mill's anticipations have been to some extent verified The manner of transacting business which existed under the East India Company has perished, but, I venture to say, not for the reasons which he predicted, but because it was not the wise contrivance which he supposed The principle which he laid down was undoubtedly true, that while a man in the position of Governor-General of India ought to possess, in the last resort, power to act upon his own judgment, he ought also to be obliged to hear the opinions of experienced councillors, and that those councillors should have the right of making their opinions known, whether they were followed or not This principle has not been infringed If Mr Mill had himself seen in operation the system which he described, he would, I am sure, have given it a different character. The truth is that a more cumbrous, I might say a more impossible, system of administration for a great empire could hardly have been invented than that which prevailed under the government of the East India Company, when every case was supposed to be laid before the Governor-General and the whole Council, and to be decided by them collectively The only reason that enabled such a system to last so long was that in matters requiring prompt and vigorous action it was not really acted upon

In the latter years of the East India Company, and for a few years after the transfer of the government to the Crown, the Governor-General was frequently separated from his Council His presence was often required in northern India by reasons of political necessity He was authorised to exercise, while absent from the Council, all the powers of the Governor-General in



Council, except the power of legislation. The Council remained in Calcutta under the presidency of the senior member, who exercised, during the Governor-General's absence, all the powers of the Governor-General in Council, except the power of giving assent to laws. There was a double Government, with a division of authority and responsibility fatal to good administration. Sir Henry Maine has described, from his own observation as a member of Council, the manner in which the system actually worked —

“A division of business was made between the Governor-General in the upper provinces and the President in Council at Calcutta. Everything which was of importance was referred directly to the Governor-General, and there was either a rule or an understanding that if any matter which came before the President in Council assumed, contrary to expectation, the least importance, it should be sent on to the Governor-General. Except in regard to matters belonging to the Foreign department, of which it was usual for the Governor-General himself to undertake the primary management, the severance of the Governor-General from the Council dislocated the whole machinery of Government. I was myself in Calcutta, as a member of Council during the absence of Lord Elgin in the upper provinces, in the summer of 1863. I believe it to be impossible for any human arrangement to have worked more perversely. Lord Elgin was distinguished by remarkable caution—though I doubt whether his caution was practically greater than that which any man comparatively fresh from England would display under similarly vast responsibilities—and all or most important matters were transferred by him over a distance of 1500 miles for the opinions of his Council. The result was that a great deal of work was done twice over, and a great deal not done at all.”<sup>1</sup>

In earlier times, when there were no railways or telegraphs, and hardly any roads, the duties of the Government were very different from what they are

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum on the Administration of Bengal, December 2, 1867

now Kingdoms were annexed and conquered, and stirring events were constantly going on, but the ordinary business of administration was comparatively small. But in the years immediately preceding the mutinies of 1857 rapid changes were in progress in all branches of the administration, and when the great reign of Lord Dalhousie was over he declared it to be morally and physically impossible that the Governor-General should efficiently discharge all the duties imposed upon him

The events of 1857 made the burden still heavier. The insertion by Parliament of a few words in the Indian Councils Act of 1861 gave to Lord Canning and his successors the means of reforming a system of government which had become intolerable. It empowered the Governor-General to make from time to time rules and orders for the more convenient transaction of business in his Council, and provided that any order made or act done in accordance with such rules and orders should be deemed to be the order or act of the Governor-General in Council. These provisions made it possible to bring legally to an end the system under which the whole Council was supposed to take part collectively in the disposal of all the business of the Government.

Rules were made by Lord Canning, assigning to each member of the Council the charge of a separate department of the administration, and the Council was virtually converted into a Cabinet, of which the Governor-General was the head. When this change was made it became obvious that the separation, for long periods of time, of the Governor-General from his Council was incompatible with efficient administration. The reform of procedure was completed by Lord Lawrence. Since his time the old plan of double

government, under which the Governor-General was frequently absent from the Council, with a President in Council in Calcutta, has been abandoned. It is now never adopted except as an occasional measure of merely temporary convenience.

Although the separation of departments in India is less complete than in England, and the authority of a member of Council much less extensive and exclusive than that of an English Secretary of State, the members of Council are now virtually Cabinet ministers, each of whom has charge of one of the great departments of the Government. Their ordinary duties are rather those of administrators than of councillors. The Governor-General regulates the manner in which the public business shall be distributed among them. He usually keeps the Foreign department in his own hands, the other departments, as distributed among the six Ordinary members of the Council, are known as—Home, Revenue and Agriculture, Finance, Commerce and Industry, Education, and Legislative. The Army department is taken by the Commander-in-Chief, who sits in the Council as an ‘extraordinary’ member. The Railway department is under a Railway Board, but is represented in the Council by the member for Commerce and Industry. While the member of Council takes the place of the English Secretary of State, there is in each department a secretary holding a position analogous to that of a permanent under-secretary in England. It is the duty of this secretary to place every case before the Governor-General or member in charge of his department, in a form in which it is ready for decision. He submits with it a statement of his own opinion. In minor cases the member of Council passes orders which are final. If the matter be one of greater importance,

or one in which it is proposed to overrule a local Government, he sends on the papers, with his own orders, to the Governor-General for his approval. If the Governor-General concurs, and thinks further discussion unnecessary, the orders are issued. If he does not concur, he directs that the case shall be brought before the Council, as in England an important case might come before the Cabinet. The duty rests upon the secretary, apart from his responsibility towards the member of Council in charge of the department, of bringing personally to the knowledge of the Governor-General every matter of special importance. All orders of the Government are issued in the name of the Governor-General in Council.

Although, when a question comes before the whole Council, it is usually decided in accordance with the opinion of the majority, power is reserved by law to the Governor-General to act on his own opinion alone, whenever the safety, tranquillity, or interests of the British possessions in India may, in his judgment, be essentially affected<sup>1</sup>. Recourse to this power is very seldom necessary. The only occasion in recent times on which it has been exercised in a matter of importance occurred in March 1879, when Lord Lytton, in opposition to the opinion of a majority of his Council, partially abolished the Indian import duty on English cotton goods. The occasion will be remembered in the economic history of India, because this measure rendered inevitable the application for a time to India of the policy of freedom of trade.

Another consequence has followed from the changes that I have described. The abandonment by Lord Lawrence of the system of double government, and the

<sup>1</sup> 33 Vict. c. 3, sec. 5

establishment of the departmental responsibility of the members of Council, rendered it necessary that when the Governor-General left Calcutta for northern India he should be accompanied by the Council. Lord Lawrence made Simla the ordinary summer headquarters of the Government. There was formerly much criticism of these annual migrations, but no one who has had personal knowledge of the Government of India doubts the increased efficiency of its administration since it has passed a portion of every year in a climate less enervating than that to which it was exposed in the tropical heat of Calcutta, and in which Englishmen can work as vigorously as at home. The Government does not go to Simla for a holiday, but for the hardest and most continuous portion of its work. The evil influence of the climate is not the only reason why the Government of India should not remain permanently in Bengal. It has no local duties. Its business is one of general control, and the countries of northern and western India will always be those which demand the largest share of its attention and anxiety.

I shall give in another chapter some account of the manner in which the administration of a great British province is carried on. There has been since 1870 a great and beneficial change in the relations between the supreme and provincial Governments.

In the speeches on India made by Mr. Bright, about the time when the Government of India was transferred to the Crown, one of the principles on which he insisted was the necessity of decentralising the Government. There is much in those speeches with which I am unable to agree, and much that was once true has ceased to be applicable, but I wish to quote some passages which seem to me to indicate the principles on which govern-

ment in India can alone be successfully conducted Mr Bright's speeches are accessible to every one, and I need not be accused of misrepresenting his views if I quote only those passages with which I myself agree, and which serve my present purpose —

“The point which I wish to bring before the Committee and the Government is this, because it is on this that I rely mainly—I think I may say, almost entirely—for any improvement in the future of India I believe a great improvement may be made, and by a gradual process that will dislocate nothing What you want is to decentralise your Government. You will not make a single step towards the improvement of India unless you change your whole system of government—unless you give to each presidency a Government with more independent powers than are now possessed What would be thought if the whole of Europe were under one Governor who knew only the language of the Fiji Islands, and that his subordinates were like himself, only more intelligent than the inhabitants of the Fiji Islands are supposed to be? How long does England propose to govern India? Nobody answers that question, and nobody can answer it Be it 50, or 100, or 500 years, does any man with the smallest glimmering of common sense believe that so great a country, with its twenty different nations and its twenty languages, can ever be bound up and consolidated into one compact and enduring empire? I believe such a thing to be utterly impossible We must fail in the attempt if ever we make it, and we are bound to look into the future with reference to that point ”

Mr Bright, seeing that the union of the various countries of India into a single state was impossible, went on to propose that each of the five great provinces should have a separate and almost independent Government of its own, directly subject to the British Crown, and that the central government of India under the Governor-General in Council should be abolished It is with no want of respect for Mr Bright that I say that the latter suggestion was one which could not

possibly be adopted. There is clearly nothing more essential to the maintenance of our empire in India than a strong central authority; but Mr Bright's belief was undoubtedly true that there can be no successful government in India unless the fundamental fact of the immense diversities of Indian countries and peoples be recognised, and each great province be administered by its own separate Government with a minimum of interference from outside.

There was a time when the tendency in India was towards greater centralisation, but with the viceroyalty of Lord Mayo the current happily turned in the other direction, and the provincial Governments are now far more independent than they were<sup>1</sup>. This change was mainly the result of the measures of financial decentralisation initiated in 1870, which were pronounced by Sir Henry Maine to be "much the most successful administrative reform which had taken place in India in his time"<sup>2</sup>. I shall speak of this in another chapter.

The policy of the Government of India is not to interfere unnecessarily with the details of provincial administration. The fact is recognised that the provincial Governments possess more knowledge of local requirements and conditions than any to which the distant authorities of the central Government can pretend.

Although the Governor-General in Council exercises

<sup>1</sup> [This statement is not inconsistent with the appointment in 1907 of a Royal Commission (commonly called 'The Royal Commission upon Decentralisation in India') to enquire into the existing relations between the central Government and the provincial Governments, and to report whether, by measures of decentralisation or otherwise, these relations could be simplified and improved. The Commission, while recommending considerable changes in the direction of decentralisation, reported that the powers of the provincial Governments "are decidedly larger than were the prerogatives of any local Government fifty years ago when the Crown took over the government of India" (Report, para 45).]

<sup>2</sup> *The Reign of Queen Victoria*—"India," vol. i p. 516.

only a general supervision over the internal administration of the empire, there are some branches of the public business which concern the whole of India, and which obviously can be efficiently managed by the central authority alone. The military defence of India, and the conduct of our relations with foreign powers and with the native states of India, rest with the supreme Government. While the duty of administering the laws rests with the provincial Governments, and with the local courts and authorities, the Government of India is mainly responsible for the excellence or imperfection of the laws themselves. Subject to the control of the Secretary of State, it makes provision for the construction of the railways and canals, without which there can be no proper development of the public wealth, or protection against drought and famine. It administers the post office and telegraph. It is mainly responsible for the management of the finances, and it lays down the principles by which the fiscal policy of the empire is to be guided.



## CHAPTER V

### THE HOME GOVERNMENT

The Home Government—The Secretary of State and Council of India—  
Mode of transacting business—Nature of control over the Govern-  
ment of India—Parliamentary interference—Its dangers

I MUST now refer to the Act of 1858, by which the Government of India was transferred to the Crown. It provided that all the powers of the East India Company and Board of Control should be exercised by a Secretary of State, in concert, in certain cases, with a Council, and, although various changes have been made in it by subsequent legislation, it remains in essential respects still in force <sup>1</sup>

The Council, styled the Council of India, consisted, as it was first constituted, of fifteen members appointed by the Secretary of State. The power of making these appointments is free from any restriction as to race, creed, or place of birth. By an Act passed in 1907 the Council now consists of such number of members, not being less than ten or more than fourteen, as the Secretary of State may from time to time determine. The members hold office for seven years, and this term may, for special reasons of public advantage, which must be laid before Parliament, be extended for five years more.

<sup>1</sup> The principal Acts referring to this subject are the following —21 & 22 Vict. c. 106, 22 & 23 Vict. c. 41, 23 & 24 Vict. c. 100, 32 & 33 Vict. c. 97, 7 Edw. VII c. 35

The majority of the Council must be persons who have served or resided in India for at least ten years, and who have not left India more than five years before their appointment. Most of the members are always men who have held high office in India. Several of them have usually belonged to the Indian Civil Service, and have been lieutenant-governors of provinces or members of the Viceroy's Council, others are soldiers, engineers, bankers, or men of diplomatic, official, or mercantile experience. The object aimed at by the law is to give to the Secretary of State, who must ordinarily have little personal knowledge of the details of Indian administration, the help of a body of experts. In 1907, in pursuance of the policy of constitutional reform, two Indian gentlemen were appointed to vacancies in the Council, and it may be taken for granted that for the future one or more members of the Council will always be Indians.

The position of the Council differs essentially from that formerly held by the court of directors of the East India Company, for, unlike that body, which possessed and exercised large independent powers, it has no initiative authority. Questions of the greatest importance, notorious to all the world, may be pending, but the Council can give no opinion on them until they are laid before it by the Secretary of State.

Every order proposed to be made by the Secretary of State must, before it is issued, either be submitted to a meeting of the Council, or be placed in the council-room for seven days for the perusal of the members, unless the Secretary of State considers the matter urgent, in which case, recording his reasons, he may make the order. If there is a difference of opinion between him and the Council his decision prevails, but

there is one limitation on the powers thus given to him. He cannot order expenditure without the consent of a majority of the Council. The Act of 1858 provides that "the expenditure of the revenues of India, both in India and elsewhere, shall be subject to the control of the Secretary of State in Council, and no grant or appropriation of any part of such revenues, or of any other property coming into the possession of the Secretary of State in Council by virtue of this Act, shall be made without the concurrence of a majority of votes at a meeting of the Council."

The powers thus given to the Council in controlling expenditure are, however, far from being as great as at first sight they seem to be, for they can only be exercised in regard to the ordinary business of the administration. Orders involving large expenditure may be given by the Secretary of State without either the consent or the knowledge of the Council. In dealing with questions affecting the relations of the Government with foreign powers, making war or peace, prescribing the policy to be followed towards native states, and generally in matters in which secrecy is necessary, the Secretary of State acts on his own authority alone. Before the transfer of the Government to the Crown, the Board of Control was empowered to send to India any orders on these subjects through the Secret Committee, which consisted of not more than three members of the court of directors, and those powers were transferred to the Secretary of State. Despatches from India on similar matters may be marked 'secret' in India, and they are not communicated to the members of the Council unless the Secretary of State so directs. Such questions as an Afghan war, negotiations with Russia and the Amir of Kabul regarding the affairs of Afghanistan, or

the annexation of Burma, do not come before the Council. Its members have not only no power of interference, but they have no recognised means of obtaining information in regard to such subjects other than those of the general public.

Apart from questions of this character, most of the ordinary business passes through the Council, and, consisting as it does of men possessing special experience of Indian affairs, its advice is naturally, in the great majority of cases, followed by the Secretary of State.

The business is distributed among the various departments, each of which is in charge of a permanent secretary, and the Secretary of State appoints, for consideration of the questions coming before each department, a committee consisting of four or five members of the Council. They are chosen according to their presumed knowledge of the subjects likely to be referred to them. The recommendations of the committees are laid before the Secretary of State, and, if he so directs, before the Council.

It has often been said that one result of the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown has been to increase very greatly the interference of the Home Government, and to weaken the authority of the Government in India itself. Having myself been a member of the Government of India for nearly nine years, under five Viceroys, from Lord Lawrence to Lord Ripon, and afterwards a member for ten years of the Council of the Secretary of State, this is a point on which I feel that I have authority to speak. The increased facilities of communication, the establishment of telegraphs, the greater interest in India taken by the British public and by Parliament, the growth of the

business of the Home Government in consequence of the large investments of British capital in India, and other causes, have made the relations between the two countries far more intimate than was formerly necessary or possible, and have made more frequent the cases in which final orders cannot be passed in India; but it is an error to suppose that the Secretary of State is constantly interfering in the ordinary work of Indian administration. The description of the Home Government given by Mr J S Mill in the time of the East India Company is as applicable now as when he wrote.—

“It is not,” he said, “so much an executive as a deliberative body. The executive government of India is, and must be, seated in India itself. The principal function of the Home Government is not to direct the details of administration, but to scrutinise and revise the past acts of the Indian Governments, to lay down principles and issue general instructions for their future guidance, and to give or refuse sanction to great political measures which are referred home for approval.”

The action of the Secretary of State is mainly confined to answering references made to him by the Government in India, and, apart from great political or financial questions, the number and nature of those references mainly depend on the character of the Governor-General for the time being. Some men in that position like to minimise personal responsibilities, and to ask for the orders of the Home Government before taking action. Others prefer to act on their own judgment and on that of their councillors. The Secretary of State in ordinary times initiates little.

So long as the Government of India is content to carry on the administration without largely increasing the cost of existing establishments, and without incur-

ring new and heavy charges, it is practically almost independent, so far as its action in the internal affairs of India is concerned. Even in matters connected with the public expenditure, in regard to which, as I have said, special responsibilities which cannot be avoided have been placed by Parliament on the Secretary of State in Council, the financial powers of the Governor-General in Council and of the local Governments have been largely extended since the transfer of the government to the Crown.

So far as the Secretary of State is a free agent, the foregoing observations require no qualification. He has no disposition to interfere needlessly in the details of administration in India. Pressure, however, not easy to resist, is sometimes brought to bear upon him.

The growth of interest in the good government of India among the people of this country, and among their representatives in Parliament, is earnestly to be desired, but if such interest is to be practically useful it must be intelligent and prudent, and be kept apart from the slippery domain of party politics. It cannot be said that these conditions have always been fulfilled. More than one instance could be quoted in which serious injury to India has been caused or threatened by the interference of the House of Commons in matters in regard to which the great majority of its members are profoundly ignorant, but out of which some temporary political advantage was apparently to be gained, or which possessed some special interest for the always numerous body of doctrinaires and fanatics. "Nothing," says Goethe, "is more dangerous than ignorance in action," and it may be feared that among the difficulties and perils of the future that are in store for our Indian dominion, not the least serious may be those

that spring from the ignorant action of the British House of Commons <sup>1</sup>

Although by far the greater part of the administrative improvement of the last thirty years has been due to the Governments in India, credit for some of it must be given to the Government at home. A body constituted like the Home Government of India is slow to move and sometimes obstructive, and its general policy has been conservative and cautious. The more ardent among Indian reformers have sometimes chafed under the restrictions placed upon them, but in their anxiety for improvement they are sometimes more aggressive than is politically prudent. The most important part of our administration in India has the advantage of being carried on by comparatively young men. This is an advantage of inestimable value, and one to which no small part of the general vigour and excellence of Indian administration is due. After thirty-five years' service retirement is compulsory, and this salutary rule, not often broken through, has this for its result, that every one of the highest offices of the State is held by a man

<sup>1</sup> The following passage deserves quotation as an illustration of political foresight. It was written in 1857 by Mr J S Mill, shortly before the transfer of the Government of India from the Company to the Crown —

"In the exceptional cases in which Parliament and the nation interfere in Indian affairs, the interference will not be founded on knowledge of the subject and will probably be for the most part confined to cases where an Indian question is taken up from party motives as the means of injuring a minister, or when some Indian malcontent, generally with objects opposed to good government, succeeds in interesting the sympathies of the public in his favour. For it is not the people of India but rich individuals and societies representing class interests who have the means of engaging the ear of the public through the press and through agents in Parliament."

[It may be mentioned in connection with Mill's remarks that the Royal Commission on Decentralisation in India has recently drawn attention to the burden imposed on Government officials in India "by having to supply information, sometimes of a far reaching character, in answer to questions asked in Parliament." The burden has sensibly increased of late years. (Report, para 431)]

in the prime of life One of the weakest points in our government is the incessant process of change in the *personnel* of the administration, and the constant waste of mature experience Neither the Viceroy nor any member of his Council, nor any governor or lieutenant-governor, usually holds his office for more than five years, nor is there much greater permanency in the tenure of other offices held by Englishmen The climate, and the peculiar conditions under which the government has to be carried on in a foreign country by a small body of men, make constant changes unavoidable This renders it difficult to maintain at all times a wise continuity of policy, and in this respect the India Office sometimes exercises a useful influence The advisers of the Secretary of State, although their knowledge is apt to get rusty,<sup>1</sup> often know more about India than most of the officers of the Government in India itself, they preserve the traditions of administration and the lessons of experience

<sup>1</sup> [This risk has been lessened by the Council of India Act, 1907 (7 Edw VII c. 35) It makes persons ineligible for appointment to the Council who have left India for more than five years, and it limits the ordinary term of office to seven years Before its enactment persons could be appointed to the Council who had been for ten years absent from India, and the ordinary term of office was ten years ]



## CHAPTER VI

### THE CIVIL SERVICES

Principles on which first appointments are made—The Covenanted Service—System of nomination before 1853—System of open competition—Natives of India in the Covenanted Service—The Statute of 1833—The Queen's Proclamation of 1858—The Statute of 1870—Admission of natives to posts of importance—Lord Lytton's rules—Public Service Commission—Imperial and Provincial Services—Small number of Englishmen in the Civil Service—The greater part of the administration in native hands—High character of native officers—Their salaries—Necessity for maintaining English principles of government—Question of holding competitive examinations in India—Transfer of important offices to the Provincial Services—The Public Works, Telegraph, Police, Forest, and Educational Services.

It was long ago laid down as a maxim in regard to the employment of European officers in the more important branches of the public service in India, that the first selection of young men shall not be made in that country, but shall rest with the authorities in England, while, after the first selection, those authorities shall exercise no interference. The distribution of offices, and all questions of appointment and promotion, are left absolutely to the Governments in India itself. "It is a historical fact" (I am quoting from an official paper) "that the observance of this wholesome rule has more than anything else conduced to the purity of Indian patronage, and to its general freedom from party and political bias." I doubt whether there is

any other country where appointments to the highest offices are made with so strong a desire that the men who are the most competent shall be chosen, and where jobbery is so rare

The statute of 1793,<sup>1</sup> modified by that of 1861,<sup>2</sup> reserved to members of the so-called Covenanted Service, appointed in England, the right to hold, in ordinary circumstances, the principal civil offices in India under the rank of member of Council.<sup>3</sup> These offices are enumerated in a schedule of the latter Act. It includes the offices of the secretaries to government, the head of the account department, the civil and session judges, magistrates and collectors of districts in the regulation provinces, joint and assistant magistrates and collectors, members and secretaries of the board of revenue, commissioners of revenue, and others. Persons not belonging to the Covenanted Service can only be appointed, under special circumstances, with the approval of the Secretary of State, and a majority of his Council. These statutes are still in force, but, as I shall presently show, they have been modified, in one important respect, by other legislation.

Until 1853, the first appointments to the Covenanted Service were made by the directors of the East India Company by nomination. In that year the nomination system was abolished by Parliament,<sup>4</sup> and the service was thrown open to public competition of all British subjects, without distinction of race. In 1854 regula-

<sup>1</sup> 33 Geo. III. c. 52

<sup>2</sup> 24 & 25 Vict. c. 54

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the term 'Covenanted,' as a term used to designate the Indian Civil Service, is as follows — The superior servants of the East India Company were obliged to enter into covenants, under which they bound themselves not to engage in trade, not to receive presents, to subscribe for pensions for themselves and their families, and other matters. This custom has been maintained. Successful candidates for the Civil Service of India, after passing their final examinations, enter into covenants with the Secretary of State before receiving their appointments.

<sup>4</sup> 16 & 17 Vict. c. 95

tions for the competitive examinations to be held in accordance with the Act were prepared by a committee under the presidency of Lord Macaulay, and these, although altered from time to time, have for the most part remained in force ever since. The main object of the competition was declared to be this,—to secure for the Indian Civil Service young men who had received the best, the most liberal, the most finished education that this country affords. The scheme of examination was accordingly made to embrace most of the subjects of the honour schools of the universities of Great Britain and Ireland. The limits of age for candidates have varied. Since 1892 they have been from 21 to 24. Successful candidates remain for one year on probation, at the end of which time they have to pass a final examination in subjects specially connected with the duties they will have to perform in India. Candidates who are found to have a competent knowledge of these subjects then receive their appointments to the Civil Service of India. Candidates are encouraged by the grant of a special allowance of £150 to pass their year of probation at one of the universities or colleges approved by the Secretary of State.

No one now doubts that this competitive system has been successful in its results. It cannot be said that it has given us better officers than the old system of nomination which it superseded, but it has certainly led to no falling off in general efficiency. No country has ever possessed a more admirable body of servants than the civil service of India, and in that term I here include not only the Indian Civil Service proper, but also other branches of the administration, and the numerous military officers who have contributed to its success.

Although the competitive examinations for the Indian Civil Service are open to all classes of British subjects, the number of natives of India who have been successful in obtaining appointments in it has been small. In 1909 it comprised 1244 members, of whom 65 were Indians. Other means have, however, been provided by which they can rise to high office.

Parliament has from time to time enacted measures with the avowed object of giving to natives of India a larger share in the administration. The Act of 1833<sup>1</sup> declared that "no native of the said territories, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of these, be disqualified from holding any place, office, or employment under the East India Company," but while the nomination system lasted, no native of India received an appointment to the Covenanted Service. The statute of 1858, which transferred the Government of India from the Company to the Crown, reaffirmed the system introduced in 1853, by which the Covenanted Service was thrown open to the public competition of Englishmen and natives of India alike, and on the 1st November 1858, when the transfer of the Government was completed, a proclamation was issued declaring it to be the will of Her Majesty, that "so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our services, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity to discharge."

In 1870 another important measure was enacted. The statute of that year<sup>2</sup> declared it to be "expedient that additional facilities should be given for the employment of natives of India of proved merit and ability in

<sup>1</sup> 3 & 4 Will. IV. c. 85.

<sup>2</sup> 33 Vict. c. 3.

the Civil Service of Her Majesty in India," and that subject to rules to be made by the Governor-General in Council, with the sanction of the Secretary of State, such natives might be appointed to any of the offices which had been reserved by law to the members of the Covenanted Service

Thus two roads were opened, by which high office in India may be reached. The road through competition in England is open to Englishmen and Indians alike; that through "proved merit and ability" is open to natives of the country alone

It will be understood, from what has been already said, that the system of holding competitive examinations in England was designed with the object of obtaining for the Indian Civil Service, in the best practicable manner, a sufficient number of officers to fill the posts which must ordinarily be held by Englishmen. The statute of 1870, on the other hand, was designed with the object of giving to natives of India another means of access to offices for which it was admitted that they might be fit, but from which they were practically, to a great extent, shut out. The declared intention of Parliament was to provide "additional facilities for the employment of natives of India of proved merit and ability." It was obvious that this could not be done by any fresh system of competitive examination, for not only would such a system have been unsuitable to India, but it could not afford the necessary evidence of that "proved merit and ability" on which the right to employment was to depend. It was recognised by Parliament, as the Duke of Argyll, who was then Secretary of State, wrote to the Government of India when announcing the passing of the Act, that "our duty towards the natives of India in respect of giving them

a larger share of employment in the administration of their own country is a duty which must mainly be discharged in India on the principle of careful and cautious selection" He pointed out that if this were wisely done we should gain the advantages of a competitive examination of the best kind, that we must proceed gradually, employing the natives in those offices and places which, in the actual condition of things, the Government of India might determine were really suited to them, and he gave this wise and statesmanlike warning, that "it should never be forgotten, and there should never be any hesitation in laying down the principle that it is one of our first duties to the people of India to guard the safety of our own dominion

In the full belief of the beneficial character of our administration, and of the great probability that on its cessation anarchy and misrule would reappear, the maintenance and stability of our rule must ever be kept in view as the basis of our policy, and to this end a large proportion of British functionaries in the more important posts seems essential "

Nothing could be done towards carrying out the provisions of the Act of 1870 until rules had been made by the Governor-General, and the Act remained almost a dead letter until 1879, when rules were laid down by Lord Lytton with the approval of the Secretary of State Under these rules, when they came into full operation, a sixth part of the whole number of offices reserved to the Covenanted Civil Service would have been held by natives of India In order to give gradual effect to this object the number of young men appointed in England was in 1880 reduced by one-sixth Appointments were made by selection by the provincial Governments, tests of

qualification being supplied by special examinations, and in 1889, when the system was changed, about sixty Indians had obtained offices which had previously been reserved for men appointed in England. Those rules, however, were not found to work satisfactorily, and after much discussion it was decided by the Secretary of State, Lord Kimberley, in 1886, that a Commission should be appointed by the Government of India with instructions "to devise a scheme which might reasonably be hoped to possess the necessary elements of finality, and to do full justice to the claims of natives of India to higher employment in the public service." In the previous year Lord Kimberley had pointed out in a despatch to the Government of India, that the Act of 1870 was intended by Parliament to be "the primary remedy for any defects that might show themselves in the competitive system established in 1853, and for any inconvenience or injustice which the natives of India might be shown by experience to suffer through the necessary adaptation of the examination in London to the circumstances of home-born rather than of Indian competitors" The Act, he said, was "a measure of remarkable breadth and liberality, affording an unlimited field of experiment in methods of selection"

The Commission appointed by the Government of India was carefully constituted Its president was Sir Charles Aitchison, lieutenant-governor of the Punjab, its members, fifteen in number, were chosen from the principal provinces of India, and six of them were native gentlemen The Commission visited every province of India except Burma, it examined several hundred witnesses, members of the various branches of the administration, and representatives of the educated classes of the non-official Indian and European com-

munity. The report of the Commission was unanimous, and this was the more satisfactory, because it expressed the opinion of men chosen from the most intelligent section of the native public, both Hindu and Muhammadan, and its proposals afforded, in their judgment, a due measure of satisfaction to the reasonable expectations of their countrymen. The main principles of the scheme recommended by the Commission have been carried into effect.

Under the system that was thus established, the civil service for the management of the higher branches of the executive and judicial administration is divided into two sections. The first of these consists of an Imperial Service, called the Civil Service of India, recruited by competition in England, under suitable conditions and standards of its own, open, without distinction of race, to all subjects of His Majesty, European or Indian. Its numbers are to be no more than will enable it to fill the majority of the highest civil offices, with such number of less important offices as may be sufficient to provide a course of training for the younger men. The second of the two services is a Provincial Service, recruited in each of the chief provinces, under conditions suitable to local circumstances, and consisting almost entirely of natives of the province.

Until 1889 the civil service was usually, but not quite accurately, said to consist of two great divisions, the covenanted and the uncovenanted services. The former is now the Civil Service of India. The latter had no existence as a single and separate body. Every public servant, employed in the civil administration, who did not belong to the Covenanted Civil Service or to the Army was an Uncovenanted officer. The term 'uncovenanted service' is misleading and is no longer used.



It is a common but complete mistake to suppose that the greater part of the civil administration in India is retained in the hands of Englishmen, and that natives of the country are excluded from important posts. Nothing could be further from the truth. The number of Englishmen in the civil service is so small that it is not the least extraordinary fact connected with our Indian dominion that we should be able with such a handful of men to control the administration of so vast an empire.

In 1909, in the whole of British India, there were only 955 civil charges ordinarily, but by no means always, held by members of the Covenanted Service. This branch of the service comprised 1244 members, but these numbers include officers on leave and others not actually employed. Including military officers in civil employ and others, about 1400 Englishmen are employed in the civil government of 232 millions of people, and in the partial control of 62 millions more.

Although the highest offices of control, which are comparatively very few in number, are necessarily held by Englishmen, by far the greater and a most important part of the actual administration is in native hands. Excluding the 955 offices which have been mentioned above, and excluding also all posts of minor importance, nearly all of which are held by Indians, there are about 3700 persons holding offices in the superior branches of the executive and judicial services, and among them there are only about 100 Europeans. The number of Indians employed in the public service has gone on constantly increasing, and, with very rare exceptions, they now hold all offices other than those held by the comparatively small body of men appointed in England. Under orders passed in 1879 by the Government of

Lord Lytton, which are still in force, no person other than a native of India can be appointed to any post in the executive or judicial services carrying a salary of 200 rupees a month and upwards without the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council

All these are facts which have usually been completely ignored in the numerous discussions that have taken place in Parliament and elsewhere regarding the employment of natives of India in posts of importance

The organisation of our great and highly efficient native civil service is one of the most successful achievements of the British Government in India. Native officers manage by far the greater part of the business connected with all branches of the revenue, and with the multifarious interests in land. They dispose of the greater part of the magisterial work. The duties of the civil courts throughout India, excepting the courts of appeal, are almost entirely entrusted to Indian judges. Indian judges sit on the Bench in each of the High Courts. For many years past, Indian judges have exercised jurisdiction, in all classes of civil cases, over natives and Europeans alike. Forty years ago the native civil service was badly paid, comparatively inefficient, and not always trustworthy. In these respects there has been a great change. Nothing in the recent history of India has been more remarkable than the improvement that has taken place in the standard of morality among the higher classes of native officials. Much of this has certainly been due to the fact that their position and salaries are far better than they were, and that temptations to corruption have been removed, but it cannot be doubted that much has been due to their better education. Another powerful cause has been in silent and constant operation. The

native officials have had before them, through a long course of years, the example of the irreproachable integrity of Englishmen in the higher ranks of the public service. Living in an atmosphere of official uprightness Indian judges and magistrates have become upright also.

The salaries given to natives in posts of importance are very liberal. With, possibly, the exception of England, there is no country in Europe in which judicial and executive officers receive salaries equal to those given in the native civil service of India.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to make any accurate comparison between salaries in countries where the value of money, the conditions of life, and the official duties to be performed are very different. Subject to this warning, which, however, tells strongly in favour of what I have said regarding the salaries paid to natives of India, I give the following facts. In Bengal a High Court judge, whether English or Indian, receives £3200 a year. The salaries of the native subordinate judges range from £480 to £800, and those of the Munsifs (the lowest class of judges) from £160 to £320. The salaries attached to posts formerly reserved to officers of the Covenanted Civil Service, and now held by natives in the provincial services, vary from £640 to £1600. The salaries of the higher grades in the executive service are not very dissimilar. In Algeria, the highest judicial officer, the First President of the Court of Appeal, who is always a Frenchman, receives £720, with a furnished house. No other judge has more than £400. The *Juges de Paix*, also Frenchmen, receive from £108 to £160 a year, with furnished houses. The salary of no Muhammadan judicial officer, a native of Algeria, exceeds £60. The *Préfet* of Algiers receives £1000, and two other *Préfets* receive £800, each *Préfet* has also a travelling allowance of £200 a year and a furnished house. No *Sous Préfet* has more than £360. In France itself the salaries of the higher judicial and executive officers are smaller than those given to natives in India. For instance, the First President of the *Cour de Cassation* receives £1200. In the *Cour d'Appel*, the salaries of the First Presidents range from £600 to £1000, and of the other Presidents from £300 to £550. In the *Tribunaux de Première Instance* the salaries of the judges are from £144 to £800. The *Juges d'Instruction* receive from £115 to £384, the *Juges de Paix* from £72 to £320. In many cases these salaries are supplemented by the grant of furnished houses and by various allowances, usually of small amount. A comparison between the salaries given to officers of the executive service in India and in France would show similar results. The great majority of the *Préfets* in France, who hold offices second in importance to hardly any in the country, receive less than native Deputy Magistrates of the higher grades in Bengal.

[Regarding other countries some particulars may be given. In Spain the President of the Supreme Court at Madrid receives £1200, and the other Judges of the Court £600 and £700. The Presidents of the Provincial Courts receive

Salaries depend on the service to which a man belongs, and are not affected by questions of nationality. Thus, in the Imperial Service, recruited in England, the rules regarding pay, leave, and pension are the same for all members, whether they are European or Indian. In the provincial services, recruited in India, the conditions of service are fixed on independent grounds. They are regulated in both cases by consideration of the terms necessary to secure the desired qualifications.

I have shown how extremely small is the number of Englishmen in the Covenanted or Imperial Service, which may be said to represent the only permanent English official element in India. The Public Service

£400, and the other Judges of those Courts £350 each. The salaries of Governors of provinces (other than Madrid and Barcelona, where the salary is £800) are £500, with an entertainment allowance of £200. In Sweden the Judges of the High Court of Justice receive £610, heads of departments in the Ministry of Justice £500, the Director of Post Offices £600, the Director of the Agricultural Department £555. In Denmark the salary of the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court is £555, and the salaries of the other Judges of the Court £333 to £444. The Chief Judge of the Criminal and Police Court receives £333 to £400, and the other Judges of the Court £177 to £266. A University Professor begins on £200 and rises to £333. In Italy the salaries of *présfets* range from £400 to £450 and of *sub présfets* from £100 to £240. Salaries of Judges of the Highest Courts range from £400 to £600. Salaries of University professors from £280 to £400, and of headmasters of *Lycées* and *Gymnasias* from £118 to £290. In Japan, the administrative system offers an interesting analogy to the Indian tripartite division of the public service into Imperial, Provincial, and Subordinate. In Japan the officials are of *chokunin*, *sonin*, or *hannin* rank, according as they are appointed by the Emperor, the Prime Minister, or the head of a department. Certain high offices of control are reserved to officials of *chokunin* rank. Others may be held by either *chokunin* or *sonin* officials, in which case the salary received varies according to the official's class. The prevailing feature of official salaries in Japan is their lowness. The salary of the President of the Court of Administrative Litigation, who is always an official of *chokunin* rank, is only £612. The other Judges of the Court, if *chokunin* officials, receive £306 to £423, but if *sonin* officials, £102 to £306. The Inspector General of Police, always a *chokunin* official, receives £377. Superintendents of Police (*sonin* officials) receive £76 to £306. The Presidents of the two Imperial Universities, who are of *chokunin* rank, receive £510 to £561. University lecturers £120 to £255. The President of the Railway Board receives £765, the Chief Engineer to the Board £377 to £510, the Director of Posts and Telegraphs £377. In some cases *sonin* officials receive, in addition to their salaries, allowances varying from £31 to £51 a year.]

Commission laid great stress upon this fact, and on the consequent necessity of recruiting that service in a manner which shall always secure the maintenance of English principles and methods of government. They therefore rejected as altogether inadmissible the proposal that competitive examinations for native candidates should be held in India, as well as in England. That proposal was afterwards revived by a resolution, passed under circumstances on which I will not dilate, by the House of Commons, without any knowledge of the facts or consideration of the probable consequences. It was not, however, acted upon by the Government. The principle on which the Commission insisted is "that the conditions of the open competitive examination in England should be framed with the object of securing candidates trained in the highest and best form of English education. If, under such conditions, native candidates succeed, they will then, as Lord Macaulay said, enter the service in the best and most honourable way.

Natives of India who undergo English training and show the degree of enterprise, strength of character, and other qualities without which success can scarcely be expected in the English examination, are to be welcomed as suitable recruits for the Covenanted Civil Service." No assumption of the possession of such qualities can be made in the case of natives whose education and training have been entirely Indian. They may be thoroughly competent for many important offices, but we cannot depend on their possessing the habits of thought, the sympathy with English principles of administration, the vigour and the energy which are necessary qualifications for employment in a comparatively small service constituting the *corps d'élite* entrusted with the highest functions of government.

There are other considerations of importance "To attract English youths of suitable education and intellectual promise to the Covenanted Service in India, it is necessary to offer greater inducements in salary, pension, and furlough than would be requisite were the duties to be performed in their own country or under less unfavourable conditions of climate To compensate successful native candidates for the inconvenience of presenting themselves at the examination in England, and to avoid an invidious distinction, advantages similar to those given to Englishmen are allowed them But it would impose an unnecessary, and therefore unjustifiable, burden on the revenues of India, to provide larger emoluments or furlough privileges than are sufficient to attract natives of high education and ability to an examination for the public service in India This consideration has constantly been kept in view by the Government of India As education in that country has from time to time qualified natives to take a more extensive part in the administration, European agency has been curtailed, and the field for the employment of natives has been extended At the same time, the statute of 1870 has put it in the power of the Government to secure the services of natives who have given proof of eminent capacity for employment in any of the offices reserved by the statute of 1861 "<sup>1</sup>

The constitution of the provincial service involved a reduction and a transfer to natives of India of one-sixth of the posts reserved by the statute of 1861 to the Covenanted Civil Service, and there is now "a series of offices, rising from the subordinate classes of administrative business to a very high level of superior and responsible duties, judicial and executive, which

<sup>1</sup> Despatch from Secretary of State to Government of India, Sept. 12, 1889

throw open a sure and honourable prospect of employment to persons appointed in India, and of continuous promotion to officers of tried merit and ability”<sup>1</sup>

The number of higher appointments thus transferred to the provincial service and assigned exclusively to natives of India is very considerable. Thus, for example, in Bengal, twenty of the offices formerly reserved to the Covenanted Civil Service may now be held by natives, among them are six judgeships, and four appointments of magistrate and collector—the highest judicial and executive posts in an Indian district.

Rules have been laid down in each province prescribing the conditions under which the provincial Government may appoint natives of proved merit and ability to any of these offices. The first and paramount condition of appointment in every case is proved fitness for the post, and, apart from such fitness, seniority gives no claim. Barristers and pleaders, natives of India, who have been enrolled for not less than ten years, may, in special cases, be appointed to judicial offices, although they do not at the time of appointment belong to the provincial service.

The statute of 1870, under which these rules were made, applied only to the appointment of natives of India to offices formerly reserved by statute to the Covenanted Civil Service. It did not allow the appointment of Europeans to such offices, other than members of that service, and in this respect it left untouched the restrictions imposed by the Act of 1861. Under that Act, in the so-called regulation provinces of Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and Agra, no Europeans other than members of the Covenanted Service can hold any of the offices reserved by law to that service unless they are appointed

<sup>1</sup> Secretary of State to Government of India, Sept. 12, 1889

with the special sanction of the Secretary of State and a majority of his Council. The Act of 1861 does not apply to the non-regulation provinces, the Punjab, Oudh, the Central Provinces, and Burma. In those provinces the discretion of the Government to exercise the power of appointment as it thinks fit is unrestricted by statute, and in the past a considerable share in the higher branches of the civil administration has been entrusted to military officers belonging to the Indian Army, and to others. But the practice of recruiting military officers for civil work has now been discontinued, except in Burma.

In addition to the two branches of the civil service that have been described, there is a very large subordinate service in each province, from which promotion to the provincial service may be made as a reward for conspicuous merit. This is essentially a native service, in which practically no Europeans are employed. Some of the offices in it, although inferior in dignity to those in the superior services, are important and well paid.

I have hitherto referred only to the executive and judicial services. In other important departments of the administration there is a division into two branches similar to that between the Imperial and Provincial Services, one branch being recruited in England and consisting chiefly of Englishmen, and the other being recruited in India and consisting of natives of India. A division of this sort into two branches is made in the departments of Public Works, Telegraph, Forests, Police, and Education.

The Imperial branch of the Public Works Department is recruited from officers of the Royal Engineers, and from persons who, having received an engineer's training in England, are appointed by the Secretary of State on the recommendation of a selection com-



mittee There are four engineering colleges in India, and they furnish to natives of India access to the provincial branch of the Public Works Department For many of the more important posts, which require special scientific and technical knowledge, it is not at present always possible to find Indians possessing the necessary qualifications The Imperial branch of the Telegraph Department is recruited from candidates in this country possessing the requisite technical qualifications In the superior branch of the Indian Police Service a strong European element is necessary, and for first appointments officers are recruited partly through open competition in England and partly in India The Educational Service is divided into two sections the Indian Educational Service, to which the first appointments are made by selection by the Secretary of State, and the Provincial Educational Service, which is recruited exclusively in India For the first the Secretary of State usually selects graduates of the universities of the United Kingdom who have had experience in teaching For the Imperial branch of the Forest Service probationers are approved by the Secretary of State on the recommendation of a selection committee from candidates possessing specified qualifications, and are required to undergo a training in forestry, partly in this country and partly in Germany, before they are finally appointed <sup>1</sup>

I shall return, in a subsequent chapter, to the subject of the employment of natives of India in posts of high importance <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Full particulars regarding the admission to all the principal Indian services—Civil, Military, and Marine,—and tables showing the salaries given to all the chief officers of the administration will be found in the *India List*, and *India Office List*, published annually

<sup>2</sup> Chapter XXV

## CHAPTER VII

### THE LAWS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

The foundations of the existing Judicial System—Regulations and Acts—The Laws and the Courts before the transfer of the Government to the Crown—Regulation and Non-Regulation Provinces—The Indian Law Commission—Lord Macaulay and the Penal Code—The progress of codification—Sir Henry Maine on the Indian Codes—Sir James Stephen on the Indian Penal Code—The establishment of High Courts—The Code of Criminal Procedure—Constitution of the Criminal Courts—Criminal jurisdiction over European British subjects—Changes in the Law in 1884—The codification of the Civil Law—Hindu and Muhammadan Law—The Code of Civil Procedure—Constitution of the Civil Courts—Civil jurisdiction over Europeans—The “Black Act” of 1836—The Native Judges—Defects in the existing Judicial System

ALTHOUGH much had been done by Warren Hastings to reform and organise all branches of the public service, the main foundations of the existing administration of justice in India were laid in the time of Lord Cornwallis. In 1793 the issue of formal and definite legislative enactments began in the series of laws known as the Bengal, Madras, and Bombay Regulations. Since 1833 the term ‘regulation’ has ceased to be used, the laws are called, as in England, ‘Acts’. These Regulations and Acts, and such Acts of Parliament as apply to India, constitute, apart from Hindu and Muhammadan law, of which I must speak separately, the civil and criminal law of British India.

Before the transfer of the Government to the Crown,

the administration of criminal justice was in an unsatisfactory condition. The police was often oppressive, inefficient, and corrupt. In the greater part of British India, the criminal law and procedure were a jumble based on the old Muhammadan law, eked out and rendered tolerable by the Regulations and Acts of our own Government, by fragments of English law, and by the decisions and instructions of the superior courts. Civil justice was in a worse condition. The law was only to be found in a wilderness of enactments and 'circular orders' of the courts, and as the number of these increased they became in course of time, as Sir Henry Cunningham says, "hopelessly unwieldy, entangled, and confusing. Human diligence shrank from the task of searching amid the voluminous provisions of obsolete or repealed legislation for a germ of living law, and grave illegalities not unfrequently occurred, owing to the ignorance which the chaotic condition of the statute-book rendered almost inevitable."<sup>1</sup>

These difficulties were increased by the devotion of the superior Indian courts of that time to technicalities which survived long after they had ceased in England to be seriously mischievous. Even in the later years of the East India Company, the civil courts often seemed to be intended rather for the performance of certain forms and ceremonies than for the administration of justice.

While this was the condition of the law and procedure, the expansion of the empire was in more or less constant progress, and when new provinces were annexed the Government shrank from taking the judicial system of the older provinces as a model. Apart from such reasons, when the people had never been accustomed to anything but personal rule of the roughest sort, it was

<sup>1</sup> *India and its Rulers*, p. 203

often necessary, on the first introduction of our government, to concentrate executive and judicial authority in the same hands. Government by regular course of law cannot be substituted in a moment for a government of irresponsible power. Moreover, the simpler forms of administration were much cheaper.

It thus came to pass that there were two systems in force—one in the older provinces, and the other in the territories which had more recently come into our possession. The former were called ‘regulation,’ and the latter ‘non-regulation’ provinces. A non-regulation province was one to which the old Regulations and Acts in force in the regulation provinces had not been extended, in which fewer officers were employed, and in which executive and judicial functions were, to a great extent, exercised by the same persons. Bengal, the present Agra province, Madras, and Bombay were regulation provinces, the Punjab, Oudh, the Central Provinces, and British Burma were non-regulation.

It is a mistake, though a common one, to suppose that in the more advanced of the non-regulation provinces, as, for example, in the Punjab, when the Government was transferred to the Crown, the administration was conducted in a rough and ready way, in accordance with our officers’ own notions of equity, unhampered by law. The Government of the Punjab, in 1860, really deserved better than the Government of the Agra province or of Bengal, so far as the judicial administration was concerned, to be called a government by law. In the former the laws, though simple, were rational, intelligible, and certain, in the latter the system was so chaotic that there was virtually almost no law at all. When the admirable codes of law and procedure, of which I shall presently speak, were

introduced, less change had to be made in the system of administering criminal and civil justice in the non-regulation than in the regulation provinces

The superiority of the administration which was so marked in the non-regulation provinces towards the close of the East India Company's Government ceased before many more years had passed. Improvement in the older provinces went on rapidly, and, although differences in the form of the administration still exist, the distinctions between regulation and non-regulation provinces have become much less important than they were. A few comparatively wild tracts alone remain outside the pale of the codes of law and procedure which apply to the whole of British India.

The first steps towards the simplification and improvement of the law were taken in the time of the East India Company, but they led to little practical result before the transfer of the Government to the Crown. In 1833 it was provided by the Act of Parliament which renewed the Company's charter that a fourth member of Council should be appointed, in concert with a Commission, for the purpose of preparing a body of law for British India. Lord Macaulay was appointed member of Council, and the first subject taken up was the preparation of a penal code. This work fell chiefly upon Lord Macaulay, and it was completed by him while he was in India, between 1834 and 1838. The code remained as a mere draft for twenty-two years, and it was not until 1860 that it became law. During this interval it was revised from time to time by Lord Macaulay's successors, and especially by Sir Barnes Peacock, the last chief justice of the Supreme Court of Calcutta. In the words of Sir James Stephen, "The long delay in the enactment of the penal code had

thus the singular but most beneficial result of reserving a work which had been drawn up by the most distinguished author of the day for a minutely careful revision by a professional lawyer, possessed of as great experience and as much technical knowledge as any man of his time. An ideal code ought to be drawn by a Bacon and settled by a Coke " <sup>1</sup>

Although many valuable recommendations for the improvement of the criminal and civil law were made by the Commission of which Lord Macaulay was a member, the penal code was the only important result of its labours. In 1853, when the Company's charter was again renewed,<sup>2</sup> a fresh Commission was appointed in England, and this was followed in 1861 by a third Commission, for the purpose of preparing a body of substantive law for India, "and also to consider and report on such other matters relating to the reform of the laws of India as might be referred to them by the Secretary of State." To these two Commissions, whose work continued until 1870, and to the eminent men who since the time of Lord Macaulay have held the office of legal member of Council, we owe the succession of excellent laws which have been passed by the Indian legislature, and which form chapters in a system of codified law. This system is not yet complete, but there is no country where the work of codification has made greater progress. "British India," writes Sir Henry Maine, "is now in possession of a set of codes which approach the highest standard of excellence which this species of legislation has reached. In form, intelligibility, and in comprehensiveness, the Indian codes stand against all competition " <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Criminal Law*, vol iii p 300

<sup>2</sup> 16 & 17 Vict c 95

<sup>3</sup> *The Reign of Queen Victoria*—"India," vol 1 p 503

The penal code, which became law in 1860, was followed in 1861 by the code of criminal procedure. Substantially, the whole criminal law of British India is contained in these two laws

In regard to the merits of the Indian penal code no one could speak with higher authority than Sir James Stephen, and in forming his judgment he not only had the advantage of his English experience, but of personal knowledge gained by observation in India. He pronounced it to be "by far the best system of criminal law in the world," and I cannot doubt that he was right in his prediction that it will prove the most remarkable and lasting monument of Lord Macaulay, its author. The authority of his other writings is far from as indisputable as it was, but his penal code has (in Sir James Stephen's words) "triumphantly supported the test of experience for upwards of twenty-one years, during which time it has met with a degree of success which can hardly be ascribed to any other statute approaching the same dimensions"

I cannot do better than continue my quotation —

"The Indian penal code may be described as the criminal law of England freed from all technicalities and superfluities, systematically arranged, and modified in some few particulars (they are surprisingly few) to suit the circumstances of British India. It is practically impossible to misunderstand the penal code, and, though it has been in force for more than twenty years, and is in daily use in every part of India by all sorts of courts and amongst communities of every degree of civilisation, and has given rise to countless decisions, no obscurity or ambiguity worth speaking of has been discovered in it. Since its enactment it has been substantially the only body of criminal law in force in India, though a few other statutes contain penal provisions on various special subjects. I have already expressed my opinion that the Indian penal code has been triumphantly successful. The rigorous administration of justice

of which it forms an essential part has beaten down crime throughout the whole of India to such an extent that the greater part of that vast country would compare favourably, as far as the absence of crime goes, with any part of the United Kingdom, except perhaps Ireland in quiet times and apart from political and agrarian offences. Apart from this, it has met with another kind of success. Till I had been in India I could not have believed it to be possible that so extensive a body of law could be made so generally known to all whom it concerned in its minutest details. I do not believe that any English lawyer or judge has anything like so accurate and comprehensive and distinct a knowledge of the criminal law of England as average Indian civilians have of the penal code. Nor has all the ingenuity of commentators been able to introduce any serious difficulty into the subject. After twenty years' use it is still true that any one who wants to know what the criminal law of India is has only to read the penal code with a common use of memory and attention"<sup>1</sup>

Until 1861 the Supreme Courts established by Royal Charter in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay exercised original criminal and civil jurisdiction over all classes within the limits of the three presidency towns. The principal criminal and civil courts established by the Company's government in the mofussil (as everything outside the presidency towns was termed) were called respectively the *Sudder Nizámat* and *Sudder Diwání Adálat*. They were the supreme courts of appeal, and capital sentences were referred to the *Nizámat Adálat* for confirmation.

In 1861 the Supreme and Sudder Courts were abolished by Act of Parliament,<sup>2</sup> and in substitution for them High Courts with both criminal and civil jurisdiction were established by letters patent, one for each

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Criminal Law*, vol. III, p. 332. The passages quoted were written by Sir James Stephen in 1881, and, as regards ordinary crime in India (apart from seditious and political offences), they are equally true now.

<sup>2</sup> 24 & 25 Vict. c. 104.



of the provinces of Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and the present Agra province For parts of India not included in any of those provinces, high courts were formed under other names by the legislative authority of the Government of India, in the Punjab and in Lower Burma there are Chief Courts with three or more judges, in the other provinces the chief appellate authority is an officer called the Judicial Commissioner The judges of the High Courts are partly English barristers and partly members of the Indian Civil Service, and there are in each court one or more Indian judges chosen from the provincial branch of the judicial service or from the native bar The High Courts in the several provinces are the courts of appeal from the district courts, criminal and civil, and their decisions are final, except in certain cases in which an appeal lies to His Majesty in Council, and is heard by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England

The High Courts exercise constant supervision over all the subordinate courts Elaborate returns are regularly sent to them at short intervals, showing in great detail the business disposed of, and, as the evidence in every case has to be recorded, the High Courts are able, by examining the returns, by sending for proceedings, and by calling for explanations, as well as from the cases that come before them in appeal, to keep themselves acquainted with the manner in which all the courts are discharging their duties

The code of criminal procedure, which became law in 1861, has been recast and amended from time to time, but in essential respects it has not been much altered It is in force throughout British India, although a few of its provisions have, in some parts of the country, been modified to meet special requirements Among

all the laws of India there is none more important than this, which regulates the machinery by which peace and order are maintained, and by which crime is prevented and punished. It describes the constitution of all the criminal courts, it defines the powers which each court can exercise, it classifies the offences under the penal code or other laws which each judge or magistrate can try, it regulates the manner in which police investigations are to be carried on, the powers of the police to make arrest with or without the warrant of a magistrate, the proceedings to be taken for keeping the peace and for preventing unlawful assemblies and for the removal of public nuisances, the manner in which accused persons are to be brought before the magistrate, in which inquiries and trials are to be held, in which evidence is to be heard and recorded, in which commitments to the superior courts are to be made, it contains rules for the trial of cases with juries and assessors, for the admission of appeals, for the revision of sentences and orders by the superior courts, and for many other matters more or less directly connected with criminal procedure. As Sir James Stephen said in one of his speeches in India, this code is the principal means through which the practical everyday business of governing the empire is carried on. The system which it lays down is complete, efficient, and successful.

In every province there are a certain number of divisions, in each of which a court of session is established, presided over by a sessions judge. Additional, joint, and assistant sessions judges may be appointed. Every sessions division consists of a certain number of districts, to each of which a magistrate, called 'the district magistrate,' is appointed. Any number of subordinate magistrates that may be required are attached

to the district, subject to the general control of the district magistrate. In the cities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay there are magistrates called 'presidency magistrates'. To enable a magistrate or judge to exercise jurisdiction over European British subjects, he must be appointed a justice of the peace, and a justice of the peace must himself be a European British subject. There are certain exceptions to this rule. The judges of the High Courts, the sessions judges, district magistrates, and presidency magistrates are justices of the peace *ex officio*, and the law does not require that they shall be European British subjects.

A High Court may pass any sentence authorised by the penal code or other law. All trials before the High Court are by jury.<sup>1</sup>

A sessions judge may pass any sentence authorised by law, but sentences of death are subject to confirmation by the High Court. All trials before the court of session are either by jury or with assessors.

There are three classes of magistrates —

(1) Courts of presidency magistrates, and of magistrates of the first class, in which district magistrates are included, they can pass sentences of imprisonment not exceeding two years, and of fine not exceeding 1000 rupees. In cases in which they are not competent finally to decide, they commit for trial to the court of session or the High Court.

(2) Courts of magistrates of the second class. They

<sup>1</sup> [As an exception to this, trials before a special bench of three judges of the High Court under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 are held without a jury. This Act provides a special procedure for the more ready trial of certain grave offences against the State or the public tranquillity, such as unhappily have occurred in parts of India of recent years. The Act is in force in those provinces only where flagrant crime of this character has occurred, and its procedure cannot be resorted to in any particular case except with the previous sanction of the Governor General in Council.]

can pass sentence of imprisonment not exceeding six months, or of fine not exceeding 200 rupees

(3) Courts of magistrates of the third class They can pass sentences of imprisonment not exceeding one month, or of fine not exceeding 50 rupees

In certain cases and under certain restrictions, magistrates of the first class can pass sentences of whipping

The judges of the High Courts established by letters patent are appointed by the Crown, the judges of the Chief Courts of the Punjab and Burma, and the judicial commissioner in the Central Provinces, in Upper Burma, and in the North-West Frontier Province, are appointed by the Governor-General in Council The judicial commissioner in Oudh is appointed by the local Government with the sanction of the Governor-General in Council Other judges and magistrates are appointed by the provincial Governments

While the substantive criminal law is the same for all classes, certain distinctions of procedure have always been maintained in regard to criminal charges against European British subjects<sup>1</sup> Until 1872, excepting in trivial cases, a European British subject could only be tried or punished by one of the High Courts The result was often a complete denial of justice, for prosecutors and witnesses might have to travel for many hundred miles before a case could be heard This state of things was remedied in 1872, when the code of criminal procedure was re-enacted, in accordance with the proposals of Sir James Stephen, who was legal member of

<sup>1</sup> The following definition of the term 'European British subject' is given in the Code of Criminal Procedure — "European British subject means — (1) any subject of Her Majesty born, naturalised, or domiciled in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or in any of the European, American, or Australian Colonies or Possessions of Her Majesty, or in the Colony of New Zealand, or in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope or Natal, (2) any child or grand-child of any such person by legitimate descent."

Council It was then provided that European British subjects should be liable to be tried for any offences by magistrates of the highest class, who were also justices of the peace, and by judges of sessions courts, but it was necessary, in both cases, that the magistrate or judge should himself be a European British subject. A magistrate might pass sentence of imprisonment for three months and fine of 1000 rupees, a sessions judge might imprison for one year, and fine Cases requiring severer punishment were referred to the High Court In the towns of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, the presidency magistrates were justices of the peace by virtue of their offices, and, whether they were Europeans or natives, they could try and punish European British subjects

Matters remained in this position until 1883, when the Government of India considered that the law regarding jurisdiction over European British subjects required alteration Some of the native members of the Civil Service of India had reached a stage when, in the ordinary course of promotion, they would become district magistrates and judges in the courts of session Under the code of criminal procedure no native of India holding one of these offices could try any charge against a European British subject The Government considered that the law in this respect ought to be altered It was stated that "the Government of India had decided to settle the question of jurisdiction over European British subjects in such a way as to remove from the code, at once and completely, every judicial disqualification which is based merely on race distinctions"

This declaration, made in uncompromising terms, provoked a storm of indignation on the part of the European community throughout India. It was not

confined to the non-official classes, but extended almost equally to the servants of the Government, it reached a point at which it threatened to become a cause of serious political anxiety, and nothing could be more lamentable than the animosities, the prejudices, and bad feeling between Europeans and natives that were excited

The controversy ended with the virtual though not avowed abandonment of the measure proposed by the Government Act III of 1884, by which the law previously in force was amended, cannot be said to have diminished the privileges of European British subjects charged with offences, and it left their position as exceptional as before. The general disqualification of native judges and magistrates remains, but if a native of India be appointed to the post of district magistrate or sessions judge, his powers in regard to jurisdiction over European British subjects are the same as those of an Englishman holding a similar office. This provision, however, is subject to the condition that every European British subject brought for trial before the district magistrate or sessions judge has the right, however trivial be the charge, to claim to be tried by a jury of which not less than half the number shall be Europeans or Americans. No similar claim can be made by natives charged with offences, and it is a claim which could not be made by an Englishman in any magistrate's court in his own country. The legislature virtually declared that the summary powers of the European district magistrate over European offenders should be taken away, not because this was held to be in itself desirable, but because such powers could not be given to a district magistrate who is a native. While this change was made in the powers of district magistrates, the law in

regard to other magistrates remained unaltered All English magistrates of the first class, outside the presidency towns, other than the district magistrate, are appointed to be justices of the peace, and they exercise jurisdiction over European British subjects as they did before, but no native magistrates in similar positions can be appointed to be justices of the peace or exercise such jurisdiction It may happen, when a charge against a European British subject comes before a district magistrate, that a sufficient number of Europeans and Americans cannot be found in the district to constitute a jury, the case must then, under the orders of the High Court, be transferred for trial to another district where a jury can be formed Thus a possibility is afforded for the occasional revival of the scandals and denials of justice and hardship which were common before 1872, when the trial of European British subjects could only take place before the High Courts, and complainants and witnesses were liable to be sent away to great distances from their homes Fortunately this need hardly occur in practice, because the district magistrate, to whom alone these provisions apply, will usually take care to try in his own court no charge against a European British subject, but will transfer it, as he can always do, to one of his European subordinates, whose summary powers of dealing with such cases have not been touched. The law was certainly not changed for the better, but for practical purposes it remained much as it was before Act III of 1884 was passed The only other change was that district magistrates trying European British subjects with a jury were authorised to pass sentence of imprisonment, which may extend to six months, or fine, which may extend to 2000 rupees, or both

It may be feared that the result of all this has been that we must leave to a distant future the hope that the Government of India will be able to place the law regarding jurisdiction over European British subjects on a satisfactory footing

The codification of the criminal law of British India is complete. The codification of the civil law is a far more difficult task. Both Hindus and Muhammadans are in possession of great bodies of law, parts of which are believed by them to be of more or less divine origin, containing elaborate instructions on every sort of subject affecting property, inheritance, and the relations of life, and, unless these laws have been modified by British legislation, they are recognised and administered by our courts. Except where native customs and feelings and prejudices are repugnant to humanity and justice, we are bound to respect them, and the mere suspicion that we desired to interfere with them might be politically dangerous. No one is likely to attempt to codify the Muhammadan law, and there is no single body of Hindu law that is generally recognised, it differs in different provinces, and is constantly modified by local and personal custom. A large part of the substantive civil law is, therefore, and must remain, untouched by our legislation. Those branches, however, both of substantive and adjective law, where these difficulties do not apply, have been dealt with in a comprehensive manner. Codes relating to contracts, negotiable instruments, transfer of property, trusts, easements, and other subjects, evidence, limitation, and a complete code of civil procedure, have already been enacted, and these, with certain exceptions, saving local and other usages and customary rights, are generally applicable throughout British India. Another



important chapter of the civil code, the Succession Act of 1865, contains the law of intestate and testamentary succession, but the greater part of it applies only to Europeans, East Indians, and some other classes domiciled in British India, and has no application to Hindus or Muhammadans. Subject to the serious exceptions that I have noticed, there is hardly any country in which the laws are contained in so small a compass, in which they are so excellent both in substance and in form, and in which they are so easily intelligible.

The codification and simplification of the law has been one of the greatest reforms of modern times in India. There has been a prevalent but mistaken notion that India has suffered from over-legislation. Speaking generally, the result of recent legislation, apart from that which must always be required to meet current wants of the day, has been greatly to reduce the body of the law, to get rid of obsolete enactments, and to consolidate and simplify the laws in force. Many illustrations of what has been done in this direction might be given. Thus, the law under which the civil courts of Bengal were constituted had formerly to be searched for in thirteen Regulations and Acts scattered over seventy-seven years, now it is to be found in one short Act of thirty-eight sections. I remember Sir James Stephen giving to the Governor-General's legislative Council ocular demonstration of the nature of the process that had been going on, by pointing to a series of huge volumes which contained the law as it used to be, and which the table before him could scarcely hold, and then showing us a few octavo volumes which contained all the existing Acts of the legislature.

I have referred, for the most part, to those laws

only which are in force throughout India, but local conditions vary so greatly that there are many other laws applicable to particular provinces only

It cannot be said that the practical administration of justice has been as successful in the civil as in the criminal courts, but the improvement has been great since the transfer of the Government to the Crown

Before 1859 the procedure was extremely complex and technical, the delays and opportunities for corruption and fraud were endless, the native judges were often very imperfectly educated, and their integrity was sometimes open to grave suspicion. They were so miserably paid that no high standard of honesty or efficiency could be expected. In 1859 the code of civil procedure was enacted, and it has from time to time been amended. It has rendered the procedure of the courts (in theory at least) simple and reasonable, the position of the native judges has been greatly improved, they are now a well-educated class, with a good knowledge of law, and highly paid, and an immense change has taken place in their character and competency.

The constitution of the civil courts, below the High Courts of which I have already spoken, varies somewhat in different provinces, but in Bengal, the Agra Province, Madras, and Bombay, it is substantially uniform. There are usually three classes of courts: those of district judges, subordinate judges, and munsifs or subordinate judges of the second class. The judge exercises a general control over all the courts in his district, and hears certain classes of appeals. The subordinate judge can try, subject to some restrictions, cases of any value. The jurisdiction of the munsif varies. In some provinces he can hear suits not exceeding 5000

rupees, in others his powers are more limited. Appeals lie to the High Court from the decisions of the district judge. There are also small cause courts, which decide cases of small amount without appeal. In the Punjab, the Central Provinces, Oudh, and Burma the system is somewhat different, but it need not be described.

Until the year 1836, European British subjects were under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Courts alone. It was then decided, by Act XI. of 1836, that they should be made amenable to the civil courts of the Company, and that in this respect no distinctions should be maintained between them and the natives of India. This measure, commonly known as the 'Black Act,' was received in Calcutta with the furious opposition described by Lord Macaulay, the history of which is familiar to the readers of his life. Lord Macaulay was then a member of the Governor-General's Council, and to him is mainly due the honour of having insisted upon passing this wise and necessary law. The opposition of the Europeans, although to the last degree violent, was virtually confined to Calcutta, and as the number of the English outside the presidency towns was then comparatively small, the outcry against the Government was less formidable than that of 1883. I quote from a minute of Lord Macaulay the following description of the state of things that then prevailed —

"Till the passing of Act XI of 1836 an Englishman at Agra or Benares who owed a small debt to a native, who had beaten a native, who had come with a body of bludgeon-men and ploughed up a native's land, if sued by the injured party for damages, was able to drag that party before the Supreme Court of Calcutta (a distance perhaps of 1000 miles), a court which in one most important point—the character of the judges—stands as high as any court can stand, but which in every other respect I believe to be the worst in India, the most dilatory, and the most ruin-

ously expensive      The expenses of litigation in England are so heavy that people sit down quietly under wrongs and submit to losses rather than go to law, and yet the English are the richest people in the world. The people of India are poor, and the expenses of litigation in the Supreme Court are five times as great as the expenses of litigation at Westminster. An undefended cause which might be prosecuted successfully in the Court of King's Bench for about £8 cannot be prosecuted in the Supreme Court under £40. Officers of the court are enabled to accumulate in a few years, out of the substance of ruined suitors, fortunes larger than the oldest and most distinguished servant of the Company can expect to carry home after thirty or forty years of eminent service. I speak of Bengal, where the system is now in full operation. At Madras, the Supreme Court has, I believe, fulfilled its mission. It has done its work. It has beggared every rich native within its jurisdiction, and is inactive for want of somebody to ruin."

Since 1836 no distinctions of race have been recognised in the civil courts throughout India. At the present time, native judges preside over the great majority of the courts, excepting the higher appellate tribunals, in which, however, they also have seats, almost the whole administration of civil justice is in their hands. They exercise jurisdiction in all classes of civil cases over natives and Europeans alike. The Lord Chancellor said in the House of Lords in 1883, as the result of his experience of Indian cases appealed to the Privy Council, that "in respect of integrity, of learning, of knowledge, of the soundness and satisfactory character of the judgments arrived at, the judgments of the native judges were quite as good as those of the English." In regard to the character and capacity of the Indian judges of the High Courts, and of the great majority of those presiding over the subordinate civil courts, the truth of this opinion will not be questioned, and in disposing of business of this

sort, superior knowledge of the language and habits of the people often gives to the Indian many advantages over the Englishman

Notwithstanding the great improvement that has taken place, the system under which civil justice is administered cannot be said to be altogether satisfactory<sup>1</sup> It is often difficult for an ignorant population to understand, and it is too mechanical and rigid in its operation For the more difficult class of cases it is excellent, but for the mass of the judicial business in India the machinery is too elaborate for the work. In the vast majority of the suits annually brought before the courts, the value of the property or the amount in dispute is very small I am afraid there is much truth in a remark of Sir Lepel Griffin, that our courts are often more mysterious to an Indian peasant than the maze at Hampton Court to an uninstructed visitor They are also too expensive. Heavy stamp duties still exist, they were originally imposed partly as a means of obtaining revenue to meet the expenses of the courts, and partly under the unfortunate notion, not yet altogether exploded, that needless litigation is encouraged by making recourse to the courts cheap and easy

<sup>1</sup> [M Joseph Chailley, in the course of an able and well informed examination of the administration of justice in British India, has lately expressed the opinion that civil justice is "too slow and too costly" After giving figures to show the enormous number of civil suits annually dealt with by the courts, he says "Nor are these large figures due to litigants receiving encouragement in the shape of facility and cheapness of procedure. The complicated procedure, which was formerly confined to the principal courts of the older provinces, has now penetrated everywhere, and brings with it costly and dilatory formalities which are rigorously enforced by the judiciary" He remarks that the Indian Government is alive to these defects, and has from time to time endeavoured to remedy them by simplifications of procedure But he does not believe that these attempts will be successful, for the guarantees and formalities which the present system affords are dear to "the most vocal element of the population, the lawyers and the so called educated classes," and no Government would willingly invite their opposition *Administrative Problems of British India*, pp 422 and 476 ]

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FINANCES AND PUBLIC REVENUES

Responsibility for financial control—Reforms after the mutinies of 1857  
—Financial decentralisation—Existing system—Growth of the  
public revenues—Their present amount—Small proportion derived  
from taxation—The sources and amount of the public income

I HAVE explained that the final responsibility for the control of the finances of India has been placed by Parliament on the Secretary of State in Council. He cannot divest himself of this duty, but the administration could not be carried on unless the authorities in India itself were invested with ample financial discretion. The Secretary of State has therefore delegated to the Government of India large but strictly defined powers, under which it can sanction fresh expenditure and create new offices of minor importance. This is for ordinary times, but in cases of emergency, when reference to England would cause delay injurious to the public interests, there is practically no limit to the financial powers which the Government of India exercises.

In the time of the East India Company a properly organised system of financial administration hardly existed. After the mutinies of 1857 an immense increase of expenditure took place, their suppression and the restoration of order involved an addition of more

than £42,000,000 to the public debt, there was hardly a branch of the administration which was not more or less reorganised, and demands arose for every sort of improvement. The revenues were insufficient, and the financial difficulties of the Government were serious. No reforms were more urgent than the establishment of an efficient system of public accounts and of strict financial control throughout India. This work was begun most efficiently in 1860 by Mr James Wilson, the well-known Secretary to the Treasury in England, and the first financial member of the Governor-General's Council under the Crown, and it was afterwards actively continued and completed.

In carrying out these reforms it was perhaps inevitable at the outset that the central Government should retain in its own hands a larger measure of financial control than it would ultimately be expedient that it should exercise. In its anxiety to prevent extravagance it imposed rules of such stringency that no financial authority remained except its own. The whole of the revenues from all the provinces of British India were treated as belonging to a single fund, expenditure from which could be authorised by the Governor-General in Council alone. The provincial Governments were allowed no discretion in sanctioning fresh charges. They could order, without the approval of the supreme Government, and without its knowledge, the adoption of measures vitally affecting the interests of millions of people, they could make changes in the system of administration that might involve serious consequences to the State, they could, for instance (and this is a case which actually occurred), alter the basis on which the assessment of the land revenue had been made, but they could carry out no improvements, great or small, for

which the actual expenditure of money was required. If it became necessary to spend £20 on a road between two local markets, to rebuild a stable that had tumbled down, or to entertain a menial servant on wages of 10s a month, the matter had to be formally reported for the orders of the Government of India. No central authority could possibly possess the knowledge or find the time for the efficient performance of such functions throughout so vast a tract of country. The result was complete absence of real financial control, frequent wrangling between the supreme and provincial Governments, and interference by the former not only in financial but in administrative details with which the local authorities were alone competent to deal. Under these circumstances, as Sir Richard Strachey wrote at the time, "the distribution of the public income degenerated into something like a scramble, in which the most violent had the advantage, with very little attention to reason, as local economy brought no local advantage, the stimulus to avoid waste was reduced to a minimum, and as no local growth of the income led to local means of improvement, the interest in developing the public revenues was also brought down to the lowest level."

In 1867 definite proposals were made by Sir Richard Strachey for the reform of this system, and in 1871 they were adopted by Lord Mayo, who was then Viceroy. They were based on the principle that there was only one means by which local economy and efficient financial administration could be secured, that each provincial Government must be made responsible for the management of its own local finances. A certain income capable of expansion by good administration was in each case to be assigned, and, subject to some general conditions, the manner in which that income might be expended on the



various branches of the public service was to be left to the provincial Government to determine

The system of financial decentralisation inaugurated by Lord Mayo was largely developed during the viceroyalty of Lord Lytton, when I was myself finance member of the Council, and a similar policy has been followed by his successors. The effect has been felt throughout the whole system of Indian administration. While no useful powers of financial control have been surrendered by the central Government, the provincial Governments have been freed from vexatious interference which weakened their authority and efficiency, and their relations towards the Government of India have become more harmonious. They are entrusted with the management of those branches of the revenue which depend for their productiveness on good administration, and they have now a direct and, so to speak, a personal interest in rendering that management as efficient as possible, because they know that a large portion of any increase of income that may be obtained will be at their disposal for useful expenditure within their own provinces. There has been obtained, at the same time, a stronger and more real power of control by the central Government than was before possible.

The financial arrangements between the supreme and provincial Governments vary in detail, but are in each case similar in principle. Some branches of the public administration are obviously imperial rather than provincial in their nature. The Government of India must, for instance, be responsible for the military defence of the empire, for payment of the interest on the public debt, and for the charges to be met by the Home Government. Some departments, such as the post office, telegraphs, and mint, must be managed

throughout India on a uniform system, and are more conveniently controlled by the central authority. Receipts and charges under the following heads are treated wholly or chiefly as imperial—opium, salt, customs, tributes from native states, post office, telegraph, mint, the public debt, railways, and army services. The revenues from land, stamps, excise, assessed taxes, and other sources, are shared in varying proportions between the Imperial and Provincial Governments. In 1909-10, out of a total gross revenue of £75,500,000, the provincial Governments were entrusted with the expenditure of £24,700,000<sup>1</sup>. From this income they had to provide for the greater part of the expenditure incurred on the various departments of the civil administration entrusted to them, for the collection of the land revenue, for the courts of justice, jails, police, education, medical services, civil buildings and roads, and for a multitude of other charges.

Financial agreements or 'settlements' have been made by the central Government with the several provincial Governments, under which the latter receive specified shares of certain revenues and are responsible for meeting certain charges. The aggregate

<sup>1</sup> Before 1873 the gold value of the rupee was usually not much less than 2s, or one tenth of a pound sterling, and, until 1886, it was the custom, in the public accounts, to convert rupees into pounds at this conventional rate. Thus, for example, Rs 1000 was shown in the accounts as £100. In consequence of the great depreciation in the gold value of the rupee, to which reference will be made hereafter, it became impossible to maintain this system. The accounts were then shown in tens of rupees, and the symbol officially adopted to represent ten rupees was Rx. The rupee having now permanently obtained an approximate value of 1s 4d, the public accounts are shown at that ratio in pounds sterling, and the English sovereign is received at the Government treasuries as the equivalent of fifteen rupees. The system of currency actually in force is explained in Chapter XIII. It will be understood that the great changes which have taken place from time to time in the gold value of the rupee, and in the unit adopted for the public accounts, make it almost impossible to draw comparisons, except approximately, between the figures of different periods.

amount of the revenues thus assigned to each provincial Government has been determined after a careful review of the requirements, actual and prospective, of the province. Subject to general rules and conditions, the detailed management of the assigned revenues and services is left to the provincial Governments, they have the benefit of any economies that they can effect, and they share with the central Government any improvement in the revenue under the 'shared' or divided heads. There is under ordinary circumstances a steady growth in the productiveness of the revenues administered by the provincial Governments. They have thus, if their management be good, an increasing income to meet increasing demands for material and administrative improvements. The financial settlements thus made with the provincial Governments are permanent in the sense that they are not subject to revision at stated periods, though the central Government, as the final authority in India, necessarily reserves the right to revise any or all of the settlements in exceptional cases.

I have already quoted the opinion of Sir Henry Maine on these measures of decentralisation. I believe with him that no more important and successful reforms have been made in Indian administration since the transfer of the government to the Crown. But they have not reached their final limits. I have repeatedly insisted that the primary fact lying at the root of all knowledge about India is the immense diversity of the countries and peoples which it comprises, but it is a fact which centralisation of the Government ignores. While our empire was being gradually built up, concentration and centralisation in the administration were often inevitable. Now that it has been constituted on

a firm and peaceful basis, decentralisation is an essential condition of progress. The time will come when, in regard to many of the ordinary matters of internal administration, each great province of India will be virtually almost a separate state. Not only will this result be obtained without the sacrifice of any part of that supreme authority of the central Government which it is essential to maintain, but we shall gain a largely increased measure of political security. No central Government, as Sir Henry Maine has observed, entrusted with the charge of such an unexampled undertaking as the rule of India, can escape serious occasional errors. "Under a centralised Government there is danger of generalising a local mistake. Localised, a mistake can be corrected with comparative ease, it becomes dangerous in proportion to the area of its diffusion"<sup>1</sup>

It has been said with truth that India has become one of the great powers of the world, and so far as her public finances are concerned she has practically no dependence on Great Britain. Financially this country contributes nothing to the maintenance of her Indian Empire. For all the work that she undertakes for India, whether it be for the British army by which India is garrisoned, the charges for the India Office at home, or for any other services, great or small, she receives full payment. Although, in some matters, India has sometimes been treated with scant generosity, there can be no doubt that the general principle which England has laid down has been altogether wise. Great dependencies, if they are to be permanently maintained, must, as M. Harmand has observed, "be organised like true states, provided with all the organs essential to the existence and work-

<sup>1</sup> [See note appended to this Chapter.]

ing of a state, and possessed of all the characteristics which go to form a state, excepting one—political independence . An autonomous administration alone is in a position to develop local resources, to utilise them judiciously, and to administer them with prudence and foresight, to become acquainted with the needs of the subject populations, to legislate in conformity with their special conditions, and to lead them onward to prosperity, in short, to enable these communities to live their own life, to defend themselves with their own unaided resources from the attacks of external foes, and to keep them, when peace is concluded, still attached to the mother-country ”<sup>1</sup>

A few figures will show what India has become financially, and they will illustrate the remarkable changes of the last half-century.

In 1840 the gross revenues of India were £21,000,000, in 1857, the year before the assumption of the government by the Crown, they were £32,000,000, in 1910 they were £74,000,000. Equally remarkable figures might be given for the public expenditure. I will give one example only. In 1840 the gross expenditure on account of all classes of public works in India hardly exceeded £200,000, in 1857 it had risen to nearly £3,000,000, in 1910, including the cost of working the railways and canals, and interest on the public works debt, it exceeded £29,500,000.

It is true that few of these figures are really comparable, but I give them to illustrate the magnitude of the changes that have taken place in India. One fact, which I have already mentioned, is sufficient to show that it is only for this purpose that such comparisons

<sup>1</sup> *L'Inde*. Preface by M. Jules Harmand to the French translation of the English edition of this work.

can usefully be made Since 1840, six great provinces, covering some 500,000 square miles, with a population of more than 60,000,000, have been added to the empire

The immense growth of the revenues has not been due to increased taxation If, without going back to a time with which no comparisons are possible, we compare the present revenues of British India with those of thirty or forty years before, we shall find that there has been a diminution rather than an increase in the public burdens The land revenue, measuring it by its incidence on the area assessed, is everywhere lighter than it was The salt duties were generally much higher than they are now Customs duties heavier than those now imposed were levied in the former period on almost every article of import and export

I do not propose to speak of the present financial position of India, of surpluses, deficits, and so forth It is sufficient to say that there is no great country in Europe, except our own, where that position is, on the whole, so satisfactory The amount of the public income and expenditure is affected in all countries by circumstances which are constantly changing But I shall describe the principal sources from which the revenues are derived, and give some of the more important facts connected with Indian taxation, trade, and economical interests

The gross annual revenues of British India at the present time amount to more than £74,000,000, but it would be a mistake to suppose that this sum represents the amount taken from the people by taxation The state in India has at all times reserved to itself resources which in other countries belong to individuals, and which render heavy taxation unnecessary

There is certainly no country in the world possessing a civilised Government in which the public burdens are so light. The taxation falling annually on the population of British India is about 1s 10d per head. If we were to include the land revenue it would be less than double that amount, but this would be no more reasonable than, in a similar calculation for our own country, to reckon as taxation a large proportion of the rent paid to private landholders.

In 1909-10, out of an estimated gross income of £74,374,000, only £21,855,000 was raised by taxes properly so called, £52,519,000 was derived from other sources. If we compare these figures with the corresponding figures of the English revenues, we find that, in the latter case, in 1908-9, out of a total revenue of £151,579,000, more than £125,000,000 was derived from taxation. In England, taxation supplies five-sixths, and in India considerably less than one-third of the public income.

The following table shows the gross revenues of India for 1909-10 under each of the principal heads. The latest or "revised" estimates for the year are taken —

Sources of Revenue		Estimated Receipts in 1909 10	
		£	£
Gross revenue derived from sources other than taxation	Land revenue	21,292,000	
	Opium	5,532,000	
	Forests	1,719,000	
	Tributes from Native States	597,000	
	Interest	1,177,000	
	Post Office and Telegraph	2,826,000	
	Mint	103,000	
	Receipts by civil departments and miscellaneous	1,761,000	
	Railways	12,491,000	
	Irrigation works	3,664,000	
	Other public works	272,000	
	Receipts by military departments	1,085,000	
			52,519,000
Gross revenue derived from taxation	Salt	3,307,000	
	Stamps	4,552,000	
	Excise	6,536,000	
	Provincial rates	546,000	
	Customs	4,913,000	
	Assessed taxes	1,565,000	
	Registration	436,000	
			21,855,000
Total gross revenue			74,374,000

Many of these receipts do not represent sources of net revenue. In the Indian accounts the gross receipts of each branch of the administration, with the partial exception of Railways, are entered in the accounts, whether net revenue is yielded or not. Thus under Irrigation, Post Office and Telegraphs, the gross receipts are given without any deduction for working expenses and interest charges. In the case of Railways what is shown are the total earnings less the working expenses, without deduction of the payments the State has to make in respect of interest and sinking funds on railway capital. These interest and sinking fund charges are entered on the expenditure side of the



public accounts. If these are deducted from the Railway receipts shown in the table above, the net profit from railways in 1909-10 will be found to be less than £900,000. In the same way the receipts on account of Interest shown in the table are not net receipts. The Government lends money to native states and to various public bodies, and receives from them payments of interest, these are shown among the gross revenue receipts, but on the other side of the account there is an entry of a much more considerable sum on account of interest paid by the Government on its permanent and temporary debt. Other receipt heads represent real sources of net revenue, but the expenses of collection are shown on the other side of the account. Thus, for instance, while in 1909-10 £21,292,000 is entered as the gross amount of the land revenue, £3,674,000 appears under expenditure as charges of collection. There are other receipts called 'departmental,' but with one or two exceptions I need not refer to them, or to receipts under heads which do not show a net income. Setting off against expenditure receipts of this kind, and deducting from the gross revenues charges of the kind that I have mentioned, the estimated net revenue of British India in 1909-10 was £49,539,000.

I shall now explain what are the great sources of revenue.

#### NOTE TO CHAPTER VIII

##### MEASURES OF DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA. (Page 125)

The question of decentralising Indian administration may be said to have entered on a new phase in connection with the scheme of constitutional reform with which Lord Morley's name is identified. Decentralisation, as Sir John Strachey has said in the passage on page 125, is an essential condition of progress, and he makes the bold prediction that

with regard to many of the ordinary matters of internal administration each great province in India will eventually become almost a separate state. But decentralisation may take two forms. It may take the form of freeing the provincial Governments in an increasing degree from the control of the central Government, and the district officer from the control of the provincial Government, without otherwise making any organic change in the constitution of the administration. Or it may penetrate deeper into the administrative fabric, and endeavour, by creating a genuine system of popular and local self-government, to associate the people more largely with the rulers, and to transfer to local bodies much work that is at present centralised in Government offices. Hitherto the most successful instances of decentralisation in India have been of the first kind, and the provinces have been given a very considerable measure of independence, financial and otherwise, by the central Government. But the recent measures of constitutional reform have lent importance to decentralisation as a means of fostering a healthier spirit of public life, and of training citizens for the larger responsibilities opened to them through the enlarged legislative councils, and from this point of view the necessity for developing local self-government in India has been forcibly pressed upon the Government of India by the Secretary of State for India in approving the proposals made by Lord Minto's Government for the reform of these councils (Despatch No. 193 of November 27, 1908). About the same time a Royal Commission, which had been appointed in 1907 to inquire into the relations subsisting between the several governing authorities in India, and to report whether, by measures of decentralisation or otherwise, these relations could be simplified and improved, made their report. The report covers the whole ground of the Indian administrative system, and contains 134 recommendations for the furtherance of measures of decentralisation. These recommendations are still under consideration by the Indian Governments, and it is unnecessary to discuss them or anticipate the measures that may be taken to give effect to them. The view of the Commission is that though much has been done in times past in the direction of decentralisation, there is still room for improvement. Both the Government of India and the provincial Governments are said to be "too much dominated by considerations of administrative efficiency," and to pay "too little regard to the importance of developing a strong sense of responsibility amongst their subordinate agents, and of giving sufficient weight to local sentiments and traditions." There is too much interference in unnecessary detail with the subordinate authorities, and this "results in large measure in every administrative authority in India having to do over again work already accomplished at a stage below." The recommendations of the Commission aim at enlarging the spheres of administration entrusted to provincial Governments and the authorities

subordinate to them. They would give the provincial Governments, as regards finance, more distinct sources of revenue and greater powers over their budgets. As regards administration, they would relieve these Governments from various restrictions, and limit the control of the central Government to the prescription of general principles and lines of policy. In the same spirit the Commission advocate the enhancement of the powers and authority of the district collector-magistrate, relieving him from much of the detailed work which at present falls upon him, and increasing his supervising and appellate responsibilities. Lastly, the Commission, with a view to interesting the people more largely in public affairs and to their political education, would reorganise the local self-government system in rural areas, beginning with the village as the unit, and would also improve the municipal system in urban areas. In pursuance of the same ideas the Commission advocate the substitution of 'Council Governments' for 'Lieutenant-Governorships' in the larger provinces that are at present administered by Lieutenant-Governors. In these provinces, and also in Madras and Bombay, they recommend that the Executive Council should consist of not less than four members, and contemplate that at least one member would be an Indian. Their recommendation as to the enlargement of the Executive Councils in Bombay and Madras has been given effect to by the Indian Councils Act of 1909. The Act has also made provision for the establishment, as necessary, of Executive Councils in Lieutenant-Governorships.

While it is permissible to hope that the investigations of the Royal Commission will bear good fruit, the permanent drift of administrative currents in India towards centralisation has to be reckoned with. Administrative efficiency, which the Commission would in a measure remit, is with a government like the British Indian Government almost a law of its being. It is impelled towards efficiency by the instinct of self-preservation, by its tutelary position amidst vast and helpless populations, and by constant pressure from without. The Commission have noted that the increasing interest taken by Parliament in the details of Indian administration tends to a closer check over the actions of the Government of India, of the local Governments, and of subordinate authorities. They have also noted that high standards of administration, which are foreign to an oriental country, are expected of the Indian Government by its critics. These are examples of the many outside forces which are always on the side of greater centralisation. In the development of local self-governing institutions, and in the fuller expression of Indian public opinion by means of the enlarged Legislative Councils, the Commission hope that counteracting forces may be called into existence. But even under the most favourable conditions this will necessarily be a work of time.

## CHAPTER IX

### REVENUES OTHER THAN THOSE DERIVED FROM TAXATION

The land revenue—Its nature described—Its incidence under Native and British Governments—Moderation of assessments—Aurangzib's revenues—Rates on land

THE most important of all the sources of revenue in India is the Land revenue, which yields a gross amount of about £21,000,000 a year, and this is not derived from taxation properly so called

From time immemorial the ruling power throughout India has been entitled to a share of the produce of every acre of land, unless it has transferred or limited its right, and this share is the so-called land revenue Regulation XIX of 1793, by which the permanent settlement was created in Bengal, declared that right to be "the ancient law of the country," and it is a right that has never been disputed or doubted

Mr Fawcett has described the land revenue of India in a passage which I cannot do better than quote —

"The Government in India exercises over a great portion of the soil the same rights of property as those which an English landlord exercises over his own estate. The Government in India takes the place of individual landlords, and the cultivators of the soil rent their land from the government instead of from private landholders. As far as the cultivators of the soil are concerned, it can be a matter of no consequence whatever to them whether they pay a land tax to the government, or whether they

pay rent to private landowners Hence a land tax is no harder upon the cultivator, nor does this impost cause any loss to the rest of the community It therefore follows that a land tax, so long as it does not exceed a rack-rent, cannot increase the price of products raised from the land, for those who grow products would not sell them cheaper if they paid rent to a private landlord instead of paying the same amount to the government in the form of a land tax A land tax consequently differs from all other taxes, for it possesses the excellent quality of providing a large revenue for the state without diminishing the wealth of any class of the community Those, therefore, are completely in error who quote the aggregate amount of taxation which is raised in India in order to prove how heavily the people of that country are taxed At least £20,000,000 per annum is obtained in India by the land tax, but it would be as unreasonable to consider this amount as a burden laid upon the people as it would be to consider that the whole rent which is paid to English landlords in this country is an impost levied on the cultivators of the soil"<sup>1</sup>

Instead of giving opinions of my own to the same effect, I will make another quotation from Mr J S Mill —

"A large portion of the revenue of India consists of the rent of land So far as this resource extends in any country, the public necessities of the country may be said to be provided for at no expense to the people at large Where the original right of the state to the land of the country has been reserved, and its natural—but no more than its natural—rents made available to meet the public expenditure, the people may be said to be so far untaxed, because the government only takes from them as a tax what they would otherwise have paid as rent to a private landlord It is, of course, essential that the demand of revenue should be kept within the limits of a fair rent Under the native governments, and in the earlier periods of our own, this limit was often exceeded. But, under the British rule, in every instance in which the fact of excessive assessment was proved by large outstanding balances and increased difficulty of realisation, the government has, when the fact was ascertained, taken measures for reducing the assessment The history of our

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<sup>1</sup> *Manual of Political Economy*, 5th edit., p. 568

government in India has been a continued series of reductions of taxation, and in all the improved systems of administration the object has been not merely to keep the government demand within the limits of a fair rent, but to leave a large portion of the rent to the proprietors. Thus, by far the largest item in the public revenue of India is obtained virtually without taxation, because obtained by the mere interception of a payment which, if not made to the state for public uses, would generally be made to individuals for their private use"<sup>1</sup>

Since the middle of the last century the land revenue of British India has more than doubled in amount, but it must not be supposed that the burden on the land has become heavier. The truth is that the process, described by Mr Mill as "a continued series of reductions of taxation," has gone on during this period without intermission. The increase of land revenue has been mainly due to the extension of the empire. Since 1840 there has been, as I have already noticed, an addition of some 500,000 square miles of territory. In our older provinces the growth of the land revenue has been entirely the result of increase in the area of cultivation and in the value of agricultural produce, and in no instance has it been due to enhancement of the incidence of the government demand. There has been, on the contrary, in the words of the Government of India, "a progressive reduction of assessments extending throughout the last century, and becoming more instead of less active during its second half"<sup>2</sup>

There has never, so far as our knowledge goes, been a government in India that has taken so small a share in the profits of the soil as that taken by ourselves. This is true of every province of British India. Under

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum of the Improvements in the Administration of India*, 1858

<sup>2</sup> Papers regarding the Land revenue system of British India. Presented to Parliament 1902

all preceding governments, and under native governments to this day, there has been, in the words of Mr. Thomason, "no other limit to the demand upon the land than the power of the government to enforce payment and the ability of the people to pay"

Under the system laid down by Akbar, and carried into effect in the year 1582 by the famous settlement of Todar Mal, the sovereign was held to be practising a wise moderation when he fixed his share of the gross produce of the land at 33 per cent, but this was much less than was ordinarily demanded. The Maráthas took at least one-half, and the same proportion was ordinarily assumed to be then proper share by the governments that preceded us in Madras. The result of minute inquiries made towards the end of the last century showed that the native rulers in Bengal usually took about 54 per cent. In the Punjab, when we first occupied the province, it was found that the share of the gross produce taken by the Sikh government was from 40 to 50 per cent. Elphinstone, in his *History of India*, thus sums up the facts in regard to the land revenue under native governments. "The sovereign's full share is now reckoned at one-half. A country is reckoned moderately assessed if he only takes one-third", and in one of his minutes, referring to the Deccan, he says that it seems to have been "the original principle in all settlements for the Government to take half and leave half to the cultivator"

Compare the foregoing facts with the following

Instead of sweeping off the whole or the greater part of the surplus profit of the land, our Government never takes more than a fixed share, the rate of which necessarily varies, but which only in exceptional cases exceeds 7 or 8 per cent of the gross out-turn. Many

of the native states of Bombay have been surveyed and settled on the system adopted by our government, and their rates are usually 10 to 15 per cent higher than in the British districts. In the Agra province, where the basis of the assessment is the rental of the land, and not the gross produce, our government, at the beginning of last century, took 90 per cent of the rent. We took the same proportion under the permanent settlement in Bengal. In the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh the share of the state is now less than 50 per cent of the rental, an amount estimated to be equivalent to 7·8 per cent of the gross produce<sup>1</sup>.

In Bengal the incidence is much less, but this has been the result of special causes, to which I shall again refer.

Although the demands made upon the land by the British Government are far lighter than those of the governments that preceded it, it must be remembered that the principles on which our demands have been regulated are altogether different from theirs, and comparisons between the two are misleading. While our policy has been to encourage the growth of private property in land, and to take for the state only a moderate share of the rental or produce, former governments hardly recognised the existence of such property, and frequently took from the cultivator an amount as large as the full rack-rent which might have been taken by a private landlord, or the whole of the surplus profit after the expenses of cultivation had been

<sup>1</sup> In regard to the proportions of the gross and net produce now taken as revenue, see the Reports of the Indian Famine Commissioners of 1880 and 1901, and the Resolution of the Government of India, 16th January 1902, on the Land Revenue system of British India, presented to Parliament 1902. See also Chapter XIX and note on p. 366.



defrayed The cultivator was entitled to subsistence, everything else belonged to the state.<sup>1</sup> This is often the assumption in native states at the present time. In the words of Mr J S Mill "Except during the occasional accident of a humane and vigorous local administration, the exactions had no practical limit but the inability of the peasant to pay more" At the same time, when the peasant has no rights of property, and cultivates as a rack-rented tenant, it cannot be assumed that he pays less under our system than he paid before, when there was no private landlord between him and the state

An interesting investigation was made by the late Mr. Edward Thomas, in his *Revenue Resources of the Moghul Empire*, into the question of the amount of the revenue derived from the land and other sources by the Mughal emperors, but the materials which he was able to collect were very imperfect The revenues doubtless reached their highest point under Aurangzib. Mr Thomas tells us that two manuscripts in the British Museum, copies apparently of official documents, give the land revenue of the empire for 1664-65

<sup>1</sup> "The following maxim is believed to express the ruling idea of the revenue system maintained under the Emperor Akbar — 'There shall be left for every man who cultivates his land as much as he requires for his own support till the next crop be reaped, and that of his family, and for seed. This much shall be left to him, what remains is land tax, and shall go to the public treasury' "— Sir E. Buck's *Statistical Atlas of India*, p. 22

I quote also the following passage from the Report of the Indian Famine Commission of 1901 "We have in the *Ain-i-Akbari* an authoritative contemporary record of what the share and the method of assessing it were in the most highly organised and efficient native administration that India has had. Briefly stated, the land was classed according to its productiveness, a general average out-turn for each kind of crop was struck, 'one third part of which is exacted as the royal dues' We know that this third part of the produce was constantly exceeded under the pressure of State necessity, or by farmers who contracted for the payment of the land revenue, but apart from such excesses it is manifest that in the Mughal régime the land revenue assessments were far more severe than any now enforced by the British Government."

at £26,743,000 and £24,056,000<sup>1</sup> Bernier, about the same time, gave the amount as £22,593,000, his details for the various provinces differ greatly from those in the Museum manuscripts, and Bernier himself describes his list as "ce mémoire que je ne crois pas trop exact ni véritable" Towards the end of the seventeenth century a Venetian physician, Manucci, was employed at the Court of Aurangzib, and an account of much that he learned there is to be found in Catrou's *Histoire générale de l'Empire du Mogol* (Paris, 1702) A list is given by Catrou, on Manucci's authority, of the amount of the land revenue in each province in 1697, when Aurangzib's empire was much larger than it had been thirty years before The total reaches the sum of £38,719,000 Whether these figures represent the demand or the collections is not stated, but no doubt the former is intended Three manuscripts in the India Office library give the amount of Aurangzib's land revenue at sums varying between £34,187,000 and £34,641,000, the years to which they refer are not stated, and although the totals do not much differ, the discrepancies in the details are great

Considering that the present land revenue of the British Government amounts only to £21,000,000, drawn from a more extensive empire than that of Aurangzib, the sums said to have been received or demanded from the land by the latter seem at first sight to deserve little credit It seems, however, by no means impossible that even the largest amount mentioned may be approximately correct, because, as I have just explained, no comparisons are really possible

<sup>1</sup> In these and the following figures taken from Mr Thomas, the rupee is assumed to have been equivalent to 2s

between the land revenue of former Governments and our own. The £38,000,000, or whatever may have been the actual amount of Aurangzib's revenue from land, included not only all that we now take as land revenue, but the greater part of the profit that we leave to private proprietors. For example, the rental of the landholders of Bengal is now probably not less than £12,000,000, of which less than £3,000,000 is taken by the State. If a ruler like Aurangzib were to take our place, nearly the whole sum would be claimed by him which is now intercepted by the zemindars<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> After detailing the revenues of Aurangzib, Catron, on Manucci's authority, says — "On est étonné sans doute d'une si prodigieuse opulence, mais il faut considérer que tant de richesses n'entre dans les trésors du Mogol que pour en sortir tous les ans, du moins en partie, et pour couler une autre fois sur ses terres. La moitié de l'empire subsiste par les libéralités du prince, ou du moins elle est à ses gages. Outre ce grand nombre d'officiers et de soldats qui ne vivent que de la paye, tous les paysans de la campagne, qui ne labourent que pour le souverain, sont nourris à ses frais, et presque tous les artisans des villes, qu'on fait travailler pour le Mogol, sont payés du trésor impérial. On conjecture assez quelle est la dépendance des sujets, et par conséquent, quelle est leur déférence pour leur maître."

Although I see nothing incredible in the amount which Aurangzib's land revenue is said to have reached, the evidence given by Mr Thomas to support the opinion that the total revenue of the empire was £77,438,000 seems to me altogether insufficient. It is arrived at by doubling the amount of the land revenue, and is based on the following passage from Catron's work. After enumerating the miscellaneous sources of revenue, he says, on Manucci's authority "Tout ce casuel de l'empire égale, à peu près, ou surpasse même, les immenses richesses que l'empereur perçoit des seuls fonds de terre de son domaine." Another Italian traveller, Careri, writing in 1695, says "I was told that the Mogul receives from only his hereditary countries 80 crores of rupees (£80,000,000) a year." There is apparently no other authority, excepting these general statements, for the conclusion that the total revenues of Aurangzib approached £80,000,000, and I cannot think that they deserve credence. This question of the amount of the revenues of the Mughal Emperors has been reconsidered by Sir W Hunter in his *Indian Empire* (3rd edition, 1893, pp 357 and 547). His conclusion is that during the last century of the Mughal empire the average net land revenue demand was probably about £32,000,000. An elaborate discussion of the subject will also be found in Mr Stanley Lane Poole's *Aurangzib* (Rulers of India Series). His conclusions are that in 1700 A.D. the Mughal land revenue was as much as £43,000,000. I have left my own remarks on this subject unaltered, as they stood in the first edition of this work, because they seem to me to be as good an approximation to the truth as with our present information can be given.

Although the land revenue of India is not derived from taxation properly so called, but is a portion of the rent or produce reserved by the state, in accordance with immemorial custom, the land is not entirely exempt from taxation. It is liable to certain rates which vary in the different provinces, but which are everywhere light. They are mainly applied to local purposes, such as the construction and maintenance of roads, schools, hospitals, and dispensaries.

The subject of the manner in which the land revenue is assessed and administered is one which I shall notice in a subsequent chapter<sup>1</sup>

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No confidence can, in my opinion, be placed in particular figures which purport to represent the amount of the Mughal revenues.

[Manucci's *Storia do Mogor*, or history of Mughal India, has since (in 1907) been translated and admirably edited by Mr. William Irvine, I.C.S., for the Indian Texts Series. It is a storehouse of valuable and entertaining information about India in the time of the Emperor Aurangzib. Manucci's manuscript, after serving the Jesuit Catrou for the preparation of an inaccurate and imperfect digest, disappeared and was with great difficulty discovered by Mr. Irvine. The list of the Mughal revenues given by Catrou will be found in vol. II. page 413 of Mr. Irvine's edition. Mr. Irvine considers Manucci's figures very exaggerated, and by way of comparison has added another return of a similar kind (the manuscript of which is in the British Museum) that was compiled in 1707 for the information of Aurangzib's successor. According to this return the assumed standard land revenue demand for the empire in 1707 was £33,000,000, the actual demand for the year £22,000,000, and the amount collected £19,000,000 only. Mr. Irvine remarks that figures as inflated as those given by Manucci are useless as a basis for comparing Mughal revenues with present-day taxation.]

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XIX

## CHAPTER X

### REVENUES OTHER THAN THOSE DERIVED FROM TAXATION (*continued*)

The opium revenue—Its amount—Mr Batten on the opium question—Introduction of opium into India—State monopoly under Mughal Government—Existing system—Value of Indian poppy crops—Alleged reasons for suppression of opium trade—Opium in China—Wars with China—Chefoo Convention—Effects of consuming opium—Consumption in China and India—Society for suppression of the opium trade—Its misrepresentations—Consumption by Sikhs and Rájputs—System of excise—Royal Commission of 1893—Forests—Tributes from Native States—Post office—Telegraphs.

NEXT to the Land revenue Opium has hitherto been the most productive source of revenue in India that is not strictly of the nature of taxation. The receipts under this head are from the sale of opium to China and other countries. In British India the poppy is cultivated under license, the cultivators being bound to make over the raw opium to the Opium department at a fixed price. The manufactured product is sold for export at auction to the highest bidders, and the difference between the price thus realised and the price paid to the cultivator constitutes the net profit to the public revenues. Over opium produced in the native states the British Indian Government exercises no control,

but it levies a pass or transit duty on such opium when brought into British India for export. The revenue thus derived from the auction sale of Bengal opium and from the pass duty on opium brought from the native states may be regarded as obtained from foreign countries. As such it is liable to be affected by events external to India, and for this reason it is precarious and fluctuating. But, notwithstanding this, it has been a most valuable adjunct to the ordinary revenues. The gross amount of the opium revenue in 1908-9 was £5,885,000, and the net revenue £1,615,000. But in that year the revenue was exceptionally high. The annual average net revenue for the five years ending 1907-8 was £3,690,000, for the five years ending 1902-3 £2,860,000, and for the ten years ending 1907-8 £3,275,000. Besides the revenue shown under the head of Opium, a considerable revenue is obtained from opium consumed in India, and is credited under the head of Excise. It consists of duty and license fees for the sale of the drug, and for the five years ending 1908-9 has averaged £912,000.

Questions connected with the system under which the Indian Government derives this great revenue have been the subject of so much discussion in this country, and of so much ignorant, although honest misrepresentation, that it is desirable to state somewhat fully what I believe to be the truth. I am fortunate in being able to do this with an authority and accuracy not dependent on my own knowledge and experience alone. No more complete account of the facts regarding opium in India has ever been made public than that contained in a paper read by Mr G. H. M. Batten, formerly of the Indian Civil Service, before the Society of Arts in March 1892, and Mr Batten has been good enough to

make the following abridgment of his paper, and to allow me to insert it in this chapter of my work<sup>1</sup> When necessary, the figures have been corrected to bring them up to date —

“Apart from moral considerations, the opium question, so far as India is concerned, is generally discussed as if it were one affecting only the public resources of the Indian administration, but it is much more far-reaching. The amount of revenue realised is but a part and not the greater part of the actual pecuniary value of the poppy crop and its products, while the well-being and happiness of hundreds of thousands of the people of India would be greatly affected by its extinction.

“India is essentially an agricultural country, and nearly the whole of its exports consist of products of the soil. One of the most important and valuable of these products is the opium-yielding poppy. It is impossible to state with accuracy when this plant was first introduced into India. There is little record of its early history, but it is known that the Muhammadans had succeeded, in the fifteenth century, in introducing the cultivation of the poppy into Cambay and Malwa, and that when the Emperor Akbar, in the latter half of the next century, established the Mughal Empire over Central India, he found Malwa opium a characteristic product of that country. He and his successors regarded opium as of necessity a state monopoly. There is ample evidence to prove that a large trade had been going on in opium between India and surrounding countries long before the East

<sup>1</sup> [The point of view from which the opium traffic with China is regarded in Mr Batten's paper is inapplicable to present circumstances. A new situation has been created by the resolve of the Chinese Government to extinguish the production of opium in China within a term of years, and by the measures which that Government has taken, with the sympathy and co-operation of His Majesty's Government and of the Government of India, to give effect to this policy. When Mr Batten's paper was written, there were no signs that the Chinese Government would ever contemplate interfering with the opium habit in China, or would attempt the gigantic task of suppressing the cultivation of the poppy throughout the empire. The argument of the paper is based on a supposition which then seemed very reasonable, but which is no longer tenable. It has been thought right to leave the Chapter unaltered, as it contains a good account of opium finance and opium administration, and puts forcibly the Indian case against complete suppression of the opium trade with China, so long as opium is produced in that country in quantities much exceeding the Indian import.—See further Note at the end of the Chapter.]

India Company, in 1773, undertook the supervision of the manufacture of opium in Bengal, Behar, and Orissa

"The Company, in fact, inherited from the Mughal Government this important and legitimate source of revenue on an article of luxury which India had shown itself capable of producing in high perfection, and for which there was a large demand both in and out of that country. At first they continued the system of farming the exclusive right of opium manufacture, but this was found to entail many abuses. Amongst them was the pressure brought by the contractors, in spite of the most stringent regulations to the contrary, on the cultivators, whom they forced to carry on the cultivation, and whom they cheated in various ways. It also led to the adulteration of the drug and its illicit sale. The consequences were so injurious to the revenue that, in 1797, the contract system was abandoned, and the Government assumed the monopoly of manufacture through its own agencies, a system which has remained in force until the present day. There was, indeed, at that time, no practicable alternative. The strongest opponent to the system of government manufacture would hardly contend that the growth of the poppy and the manufacture of opium should have been left free and unrestricted, as that would infallibly have led to a great increase in the produce of the drug, and probably to its deterioration. On the other hand, if it ever entered into the conception of the Court of Directors to suppress, in the interests of morality, the cultivation of the poppy in the territories then in their possession, it is doubtful whether they would have had the power in those times to have done so, and it is certain that they could not have controlled the production of the vast poppy-growing tracts outside those territories in Malwa, Cambay, and elsewhere. The only result would have been that the opium consumers in India would have been supplied from sources outside British territory, and that the export trade would have been transferred to ports other than British. It would certainly have been impossible in those days to establish a customs line to prevent the entry of opium into the Company's possessions. The Company would have sacrificed its revenue, and no one would have been benefited except the people of the territories outside the Company's possessions, at the expense of those within them.

"The state monopoly continues to be administered by the Bengal Government, although its operations now extend into the



United Provinces of Agra and Oudh Under it, no person may cultivate the poppy except with a license from the Government, and every cultivator is bound to sell the opium produced from his crop to the Government, in whose two factories, at Patna and Ghazipur, it is manufactured into the opium of commerce A portion of the manufactured opium is retained for consumption in India through vendors licensed by the excise department, and the remainder is sold monthly, by auction, in Calcutta to merchants, who export it. The Government prescribes rules for the cultivation of the poppy, the manufacture, possession, transport, import or export, and sale of opium, and any contravention of such rules is subject to stringent penalties, which may extend to imprisonment for one year or fine of 1000 rupees, or both Poppy illegally cultivated, and opium the subject of any offence against the law, is liable to confiscation, together with the vessels, packages, and coverings in which it is found, and their other contents, and the animals and conveyances used in carrying it

"Like most crops, the poppy is subject to wide seasonal fluctuations, which formerly greatly affected the market prices of opium, led to speculation and gambling amongst the buyers for export, and caused corresponding uncertainty in the Government revenue When, owing to the shortness of the supply, the price in Calcutta rose high, the direct effect was to stimulate the production of other opium competing in the foreign market with the Bengal drug, and amongst these the native production of China. Thus—and I would call particular attention to this fact, as having an important bearing on the question before us—the diminution of the supply of Indian opium to China was an incentive to the extension of poppy cultivation in China To remedy the evils thus arising from the uncertainties of the seasons, the Government decided, thirty-five years ago, to limit the sales of opium in Calcutta to a quantity which would permit the formation of a reserve stock in plenteous years to meet deficiency in years of scarcity

"Recognising the fact that the Chinese demand a large supply of opium, and that to whatever extent India was unable to satisfy that demand, it would be met, either by increase of the produce in China itself or by increased imports from other countries, the Government of India has thought it right, in the interests of the people of India, to shape its measures so as not to lose the

natural advantages India possesses in the superior quality of its produce. Any one familiar with the records of the Government of India relating to this subject, must admit this is a fair representation of its policy and motives, and that nowhere in those records can be found any indication of a desire to stimulate the consumption of opium by the Chinese.

"In pursuance of this policy, the Government yearly regulates the extent of the poppy cultivation, guided chiefly by the market prices and the stock of opium in hand. No one is forced to grow a crop of poppy against his will. The sole inducement is the price offered by the Government for the produce. Since 1895 this price has been 6 rupees a seer, which is equivalent to about 2 lbs. The Government makes advances, not bearing interest, before the crop is sown, and from time to time during its progress, thus saving the ryots from the exorbitant demands of the village money-lender. The crop, which is sown in the autumn and gathered in the spring, succeeds an autumn crop usually of Indian corn. The yield of opium per acre varies. For the five years ending 1900-1901, the average produce per acre was 12.7 lbs avoirdupois, which, at 6 rupees a seer, gave the cultivator a gross return of nearly 37 rupees per acre. In addition to this, he receives payment for the poppy flower petals and the stalks and leaves, which are used in the factory for packing the opium cakes. The total average annual payments by the Bengal Government to the poppy cultivators exceed £1,500,000.

"Besides the produce purchased by the Government, the seeds of the poppy are an important article of consumption and commerce. They are eaten parched, or employed as a condiment in the preparation of food, but perhaps their chief use is for the expression of oil, for which purpose they are not only largely used in India, but are exported in considerable quantities, chiefly to Belgium, France, and the United Kingdom. The average produce of seed per acre, after deducting what is required for sowing is stated to be about 260 lbs, yielding by native processes from 80 to 100 lbs of oil. This oil is edible, and is used largely in Europe, either as a substitute for, or adulteration of, salad oil. It is also used for illumination, mixing with paints, soap, and varnish-making. The oil cake is eaten by the poorer classes and by cattle, being rich in nitrogen. The young seedlings, which are removed at the first weedings of the crop, are sold and eaten

as a salad These by-products of the poppy crop are perfectly free from opium.

"In spite, therefore, of the labour entailed in the culture of the poppy, which requires frequent watering, and in spite of the vicissitudes of the season, which greatly affect this crop, the cultivation is popular, and the refusal of licenses is looked upon as a grievance by the ryots, as well as the landowners to whom they pay their rent

"As I have already stated, the cultivator is bound by the law to deliver the whole of the opium produced to the Government agents It is manufactured at the factories at Ghazipur and Patna into the opium of commerce, under the supervision of the scientific experts who are employed by the Government, and is then sent to Calcutta, where it is sold for export at auction by monthly instalments The greatest care is taken to preserve the purity of the drug and the uniformity of its consistence It is owing to this care, added to the natural advantages of soil and climate, that Indian opium has maintained its high reputation in the Chinese market, where it is admitted by the practical test of price to be far superior to the drug produced in China Sir Robert Hart, the Inspector-General in China, in a report written in 1881, states that 'the native product sells for one-half of the price obtained for the foreign drug' In determining the number of chests to be annually manufactured and sold, the Government is guided principally by the state of the reserve stock, the aim being to keep up a reserve equal to half a year's supply It is also guided, as I have already stated, by the prices obtained at auction If the prices rise much, production in China and Persia is stimulated, and it is necessary to increase the production in India to maintain its market, on the other hand, if the prices fall low, and opium becomes cheap, consumption is stimulated, and the production has to be restricted The object of the Government, as I have explained, is to maintain, so far as possible, uniformity in the price, and thus to avoid fluctuations in the market and in the revenue

"The average annual auction sale proceeds for the five years ending 1900-1901 were £3,234,700, the annual average number of chests sold was 40,890, each chest containing 140 lbs The price per chest was thus a little under £80 In the first four of these years the crops were abnormally bad, and the average gross annual

revenue may be taken at £4,000,000 This is a considerable falling off from the revenue of former years, and is ascribed to the extension of cultivation in China and to the improvement in that country of the preparation of the drug<sup>1</sup>

"The Bengal Government supplies the excise department not only in Bengal, but also in all the other provinces, except the Madras and Bombay presidencies, with opium for consumption in India The average receipts from this source amount to about £150,000 a year The opium is sold to the consumers through licensed vendors, to whom it is supplied at an enhanced price, and who have to pay fees for the licenses to vend The average receipts by the local Governments from this source amount to about £650,000 a year

"The declared value of the poppy seed exported from Bengal on the average of the five years ending 1900-1901 was £163,400 In 1900-1901 it amounted to £207,700

"Summing up these figures, we obtain the following result for the Bengal poppy crop —

Auction sale proceeds on opium for export	£4,000,000
Excise opium credited to Opium department	150,000
Receipts of provincial Governments from the vend of excise opium	650,000
Value of poppy seed exported	200,000
Total	£5,000,000

"In order to arrive at the ultimate annual value of the Bengal poppy crop, we must add several items which cannot be precisely estimated These are the profits to Indian merchants and shippers on the opium exported, the profits to the Indian vendors of excise opium, the value of the poppy seed consumed in India as seed-oil or oil-cake, and of the young plants used as food, and finally, the

<sup>1</sup> [For the five years ending 1907-8 the annual average sale proceeds were £4,752,000, the annual average number of chests sold was 49,380, and the price reached per chest £96 Owing to better seasons production in Bengal increased, and a larger number of chests was placed on the market. On the other hand, the production of Malwa opium declined, and the number of chests of Malwa opium passed for export during the five years averaged only 17,300 a year against 24,155 in the preceding five years Thus, in the period immediately preceding the arrangement with China for restricting the export of opium, the share of the native states in the trade considerably decreased This has simplified the problem of restricting the export ]

value of the illicit opium, which, in spite of all precautions, the cultivators are able to pass into consumption. On a moderate estimate, the value of this large trade cannot be taken at less than £2,000,000, bringing up the annual total value of the Bengal poppy crop to over £7,000,000.

"The territory in which this crop is produced may be described as a belt of country between 500 and 600 miles in length, with an average breadth of 180 miles, running north-west and south-east, between the 78th and 85th parallels of longitude, and the 24th and 29th parallels of latitude. The total area may be taken at about 100,000 square miles, lying in the districts of Behar (Bengal), and in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The average area cultivated with poppy for the five years ending 1900-1901 was 586,400 acres, or less than one per cent of the whole tract referred to, and this for only half the year, as another crop is almost invariably obtained from the same land during the other half. In the year 1900-1901 no fewer than 1,477,000 cultivators were employed on the crop.

"The only other province in British India where the poppy is allowed to be cultivated is the Punjab. It is there grown under license in nearly every district. The cultivator may dispose of his poppy crop standing to license-holders, who extract the opium, or he may extract the opium himself, and dispose of it, or of the produce, in the shape of poppy heads, to licensed vendors. The poppy heads are used as an infusion, forming a poppy tea, which is drunk by the Sikhs, who are forbidden by their religion to use tobacco in any form. The public revenue derived from the opium crop is included in the excise receipts of Provincial Governments shown above. The profits to the cultivators and vendors are difficult to estimate. For the four years ending with 1900-1901 the average area under poppy cultivation was 6258 acres, and the average production of opium was 106,300 lbs., besides poppy heads and other by-products.

"Outside of British India, the cultivation of the poppy is confined to certain native states in Central India and Rajputana, and the territory of the Gaikwar. The opium there produced is known by the generic name of Malwa opium. There are no trustworthy statistics showing the acreage under poppy, or the total quantity of opium produced. After providing for the home consumption within the native states, which must be a

very large quantity, as the habit of consuming opium there has been long established and is widespread, the remainder is consumed in those parts of British India not supplied with Bengal opium, also in Hyderabad and Mysore, or is exported by sea to China, the Straits Settlements, etc.

"The importation of Malwa opium into British territory is subject to very stringent regulations. Previous to the year 1831, by separate treaties with the native states, the British Government reserved to itself a monopoly of Malwa opium, which was purchased by the British Resident at Indore, and sold by auction either at Bombay or Calcutta. But in that year it was deemed advisable, chiefly on account of the large quantity of opium smuggled to the Portuguese settlements on the coast, to relinquish the monopoly (which involved much unpalatable interference in the internal affairs of the native states), to open the trade to the operations of private enterprise, and to substitute, as a source of revenue, the grant, at a specified rate of duty, of passes to cover the transit of Malwa opium through British territory. The present rate on opium for foreign export is Rs 500,<sup>1</sup> or £33 6 8 a chest.

"All opium transported out of the native states of Central India, Rajputana, and Baroda, has to be weighed and tested at scales established at convenient places in those states under the superintendence of officers of the British Government. The transport is permitted only under passes granted on payment of the duty and by certain specified railway routes. The average number of chests that passed the scales in the five years ending 1900-1901 was 24,155, and the average number exported by sea from Bombay was 23,310, the average declared value of which was £1,926,270. The remainder of the Malwa opium leaving the native states—about 875 chests—is consumed in India, chiefly in the Bombay Presidency, but the Madras Presidency, Hyderabad, and Mysore are also supplied from this source, and some goes to the Punjab. The value of these 875 chests may be taken at about £7000, making a total value, for 24,155 chests, of £2,096,000. To this must be added, as in the case of the Bengal opium, the profits of the merchants and shippers exporting the opium, and of the vendors in India, say nearly £1,000,000.

"The average annual exports of poppy seed from Bombay

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<sup>1</sup> [The pass duty was raised to Rs 600 in 1904.]

are valued at £250,000 Thus, the total annual value of the Malwa opium brought into British territory, and of the Malwa poppy seed exported from India, cannot be less than £3,250,000

"There remains to be considered the value of the Malwa opium consumed in the native states of Central India, Rajputana, and Baroda, also the value of the Malwa poppy seed not exported from India, and of the other by-products of the crop As I have already said, there are no data available for ascertaining or estimating the acreage under poppy cultivation in the native states in question, much less for determining the quantity and value of the whole products of that crop The population of those states is more than 20,000,000 We know that a considerable proportion of the people of these states has, for centuries, been in the habit of consuming opium, we know that the restrictions placed on the cultivation of the poppy, and on the vend of opium in British India, do not exist in these states, and we know that a vast quantity of opium is smuggled out of them. If we estimate the value of the crop, exclusive of the value of the product licitly exported, at £2,000,000, it will certainly be under the real value

"The total annual value of the poppy crops in India may thus be estimated to be as follows —

Bengal crop	£7,000,000
Malwa crop, licitly consumed in British India and exported by sea	3,250,000
Malwa crop, consumed in Central India, Rajputana, and Baroda, and smuggled thence	2,000,000
Total	£12,250,000

"This, less cost of production and transport, is divided between the producers and manufacturers, the landlords, the British and native administrations, the middlemen, merchants, shippers, vendors, etc., of India, and is paid by the ultimate consumers, principally Chinese

"This is a very moderate estimate of the sum India is asked to sacrifice annually by suppressing her opium trade. The demand for this sacrifice is made not by the people of India, not by the people of China, not by the responsible administrators

of those countries, but by an irresponsible party of philanthropists seeking to obtain their ends by the despotic action of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, in which India has no representatives

"What are the reasons put forth for demanding the destruction by a foreign country of a valuable Indian industry which, besides satisfying an internal demand in India itself, provides one tenth of the whole export trade of merchandise from India?

"The basis of this demand is the hypothesis that, except for medicinal purposes, the use of opium is wholly pernicious, that it demoralises and ruins, body and soul, the consumer, and that it produces no countervailing benefits which for a moment can be compared with the evils it causes.

"A second reason given is that the English people have created the demand for opium by the Chinese, that they have compelled the importation of Indian opium into China by force of arms, and that they are, therefore, morally responsible for the asserted degradation of the Chinese from the use of this drug

"If there is one fact more certain than any other connected with this question, it is that the people of China had used opium for centuries before the people of England had any voice in the affairs of India. A valuable *Historical Note on Opium in China* has recently been drawn up by Dr Edkins, of the Chinese customs service, and published by order of Sir Robert Hart, the Inspector-General of the Imperial maritime customs of China. From this Note it appears that opium was first brought to China by the Arabs early in the eighth century, and it is frequently mentioned by Chinese writers of that time

"But, it is said, the English have forced Indian opium on the Chinese. The war with China, which terminated in 1842, has been called the opium war, and its immediate cause was no doubt the seizure and destruction by the Chinese of a large number of chests of Indian opium belonging to English merchants. But contemporary history shows that the real objections of the Chinese were not to the import of opium, but to the necessity of paying for it in silver. Commander J Elot Bingham, who served in that war, and wrote its history, shows that the imports into China of opium, metals, cotton, etc., exceeded the exports of tea, silk, etc., by £2,500,000. The Chinese held the economic fallacy that this state of things was injurious to their country, as it drained away their silver. The Imperial edicts enlarged more on the abstraction



of their sycee silver than on the injury from opium to the morals of the people

"But to whatever extent the wars with China were connected with the smuggling of Indian opium, it is certain that since 1858, when the treaty of Tientsin was signed, the Chinese Government has had a perfectly free hand in the matter of the importation of opium. By that treaty certain commercial concessions were arranged, which included the legitimatising of the import of opium, subject to a duty being levied thereon. But in the treaty itself there was no mention of, or allusion to, the opium trade. Lord Elgin wrote that he intentionally abstained from urging any treaty recognition of that trade. The preparation of the tariff devolved on Mr Lay, the Chinese secretary to Lord Elgin's special mission, at the desire of the Chinese no less than that of Lord Elgin. Mr Lay, in a letter to the *Times* of the 22nd October 1880, wrote —

"'When I came to "opium," I inquired what course they proposed to take in respect to it. The answer was, "We have resolved to put it into the tariff as foreign medicine." I urged a moderate duty in view of the cost of collection, which was agreed to. This represents, with strict accuracy, the amount of "extortion" resorted to. The Chinese Government admitted opium as a legal article of import, not under constraint, but of their own free will deliberately.'

"In the *Times* of the 25th of same month, a letter appeared from Mr Laurence Oliphant, who was secretary to Lord Elgin's Mission, in which he confirmed the statement made by Mr Lay. He says he, with the Commissioner appointed by the Chinese Government, went through the tariff elaborated by Mr Lay with the subordinate Chinese officials —

"'When we came to the article "opium," I informed the Commissioner that I had received instructions from Lord Elgin not to insist on the insertion of the drug in the tariff, should the Chinese Government wish to omit it. This he declined to do. I then proposed that the duty should be increased beyond the figures suggested in the tariff, but to this he objected, on the ground that it would increase the inducements to smuggling. I trust that the delusion that the opium trade now existing with China was "extorted" from that country by the British Ambassador may be finally dispelled.'

"In 1876, an agreement, called the Chefoo Convention, was arrived at between the Governments of Great Britain and China, in which the British Minister, Sir Thomas Wade, promised to move his Government to make certain special arrangements as to the import of opium. These arrangements were finally carried out by an additional Article, signed at London in 1885. By this Article an addition to the import duty of 30 taels per chest was agreed to. It amounts to a further 80 taels per chest, and frees the opium from any further duty or tax whilst in transport in the interior, being, in fact, a composition of the *likin* tax. When the package is opened at the place of consumption, it is subject to any tax which may be levied on native opium.

"The receipts of the Chinese Government from the import of opium average  $8\frac{2}{3}$  millions of Haikwán taels a year. The great appreciation which has taken place in the value of gold has, of course, lowered the exchange value of the silver tael, and this, no doubt, affects China in the payment of debts to gold standard countries, but for internal purposes the value of the tael has been little affected. This large revenue, equal now to about £2,000,000, and forming more than one-third of the entire Customs revenue of China, is collected by the department presided over by Sir Robert Hart—a department admirably administered, and scrupulously accounting for its collections to the Imperial Government at Peking. The *likin*, for which the payment of 80 taels per chest is a composition, was formerly collected as transit duties by the local Chinese authorities through whose provinces the opium passed. The Imperial Government received only such portion of the collections as they could manage to get out of the Provincial Governments, who, on the other hand, strove to retain as much as possible. The arrangements under the Chefoo Convention are, therefore, very advantageous to the Imperial Government at Peking, which cannot afford to dispense with this large revenue derived from the import of opium.

"It is clear that Indian opium is now imported into China with the full approval and consent of the Chinese Government. It is equally certain that Great Britain would never fire a gun to force Indian opium on the Chinese.

"I have already referred to the early history of opium in China. Sir Robert Hart said, in 1881, that 'Native opium was known, produced, and used long before any European began the sale of

the drug along the coast' The production of opium in China has gone on steadily increasing, and has been encouraged by the restrictions and heavy taxation placed on Indian opium by the Government of India. All travellers and the consular authorities testify to the vast areas under poppy cultivation The produce of native opium has been estimated to be from three to ten times the quantity of the imported drug Chinese opium is now much better prepared than it formerly was, and it has practically driven Indian opium out of the markets of northern China, and, so far as we know, it supplies the bulk of the demand in the inland and western provinces The local drug is much cheaper than imported opium. The Burma revenue officers are constantly striving to prevent importation of cheap Chinese opium into Burma

"Of the numerous recent travellers in China, I will quote only Mr Hosie, a Consular Agent, who, in 1883, travelled from February to June through the provinces of Sse-ch'uan, Yunnan, and Kueichou. His diary has almost daily references to the extensive poppy cultivation through which he passed. In many places it was the principal crop With regard to the Government prohibition, he writes —

"I have noticed in several places west of the provincial capital a proclamation dated the 9th November 1882, by the Governor-General of Sse ch'uan, prohibiting the cultivation of the poppy, and enjoining a more extended sowing of the cereals It was always more or less mutilated, whether intentionally or not I cannot say At all events, poppy was frequently growing on the side of the road opposite to that on which the proclamation was posted It is one thing to issue instructions, another to see that they are carried out'

"The prohibition is evidently in the nature of a pious opinion, meant for show and not for use

"Mr Hosie, writing on the 5th June 1883, says —

"It seems superfluous daily to mention poppy as a crop To-day, however, it was exceedingly prominent, growing every where on the hillsides and Bottom lands Large rice bowls heaped with the drug were exposed at the door of almost every shop in every hamlet and village, not a bowl here and there, but several, eight being a very common number In fact, the whole country reeks and stinks of opium'

"With these facts before us, how can it be maintained that

the consumption of opium in China can be affected by the imports of Indian opium, except in so far that these supply a purer and more expensive article, the suppression of which would lead to larger products of native opium of inferior quality ?

"I could multiply to any extent the evidence of the extensive cultivation of poppy in China, but I think I have said enough to show that it is a fact which cannot be denied

"I will now proceed to discuss the crucial question as to the effects of consuming opium, of which there are various forms In China the usual form is by what is called smoking opium In India it is eaten In Europe it is drunk in the form of laudanum, or a tincture prepared in spirits of wine We must consider what is the effect on the average consumer, and not confine our attention to the cases of those persons only who indulge in the habit to excess, cases which I shall show are exceptional

"It may be safely said that all but a very small percentage of the people of this country are absolutely ignorant of the normal effects of the habit of using opium The popular ideas on the subject which prevail are largely due to De Quincey, who, in 1822, published the confessions of an English opium-eater Many have read this fascinating work, and many more have heard of it, and look upon De Quincey as the 'shocking example' of such a habit. But I venture to say that his confessions completely disprove the allegations put forward by the opponents of the use of the drug He was a man of a naturally delicate and nervous constitution, whose early life was subject to great physical hardship and exposure He was driven at the age of nineteen by excruciating rheumatic pains to the use of opium, in which he indulged during the rest of his life, for a long period in excessive quantities He married, and had a large family of sons and daughters. He retained his mental qualities unimpaired, led an active literary life, was one of the most brilliant, accomplished, and intellectual writers England has produced, and lived to the good age of seventy-five years De Quincey's experiences are quite consistent with the assertion that the moderate use of opium, by a person in good health, may be continued for years, not only without any harmful effects, but with absolute benefit

"Let us now see what is the effect on the Chinese, who resort to the more innocuous habit of smoking opium In February

1882, three lectures were given in St James's Hall by the late Mr William Brereton, and were subsequently published under the title, *The Truth About Opium*. Mr Brereton lived and practised as a solicitor for nearly fifteen years in Hong Kong, where he had daily experience of the custom and effects of opium-smoking. He was in no way engaged in the opium trade, and had no pecuniary interest in it, but felt it his duty to endeavour to dispel what he called the unfounded delusions which have taken possession of the public mind on the subject. His book is a storehouse of facts and arguments. It is written in a bright and intelligent style, and I strongly recommend its perusal to any one interested in the question. The facts have never been denied, or the arguments answered by any one having a personal knowledge of the subject.

"Mr Brereton states that, having had daily intercourse with the people from whom the best and most trustworthy information on the subject of opium and opium smoking could be obtained, his experience is that opium smoking as practised by the Chinese is perfectly innocuous, and that this is a fact so patent that it forces itself upon the attention of every intelligent resident in China who has given ordinary attention to the subject. He quotes numerous high authorities in support of this view. Amongst these I may mention Dr Philip Ayres, for many years Inspector of Hospitals in Hong Kong, Mr John Crawford, F.R.S., a *savant* of high reputation, who had been Governor of the Straits Settlements, and had travelled for many years in the East, Dr Oxley, a physician and naturalist of eminence, and who has had a larger experience than any man in Singapore, where there is the highest rate of the consumption of the drug, Dr Simbaldo de Mas, who had been for many years the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Court of Spain at Peking, he had travelled much in China, India, Java, Borneo, and Malacca and learned the Chinese language, Baron Rietthofen, the most experienced traveller who ever visited Sse-ch'uan, where the habit of opium-smoking is extraordinarily prevalent, Mr Colborne Baber, who knew more of that province and its people than any living Englishman, Mr W Donald Spence, Her Majesty's Consul at Tchang, who in 1881 visited the capital of Sse-ch'uan, Sir Henry Pottinger, Her Majesty's Governor-General and Minister Plenipotentiary in China, and others. The evidence of all these

persons, given from their own personal knowledge and experience, confirms that of Dr Latwell, which was as follows —

“Having passed three years in China, I may be allowed to state, as the result of my observation, and I can affirm thus far, that the effects of the abuse of the drug do not come very frequently under observation, and that when cases do occur, the habit is frequently found to have been induced by the presence of some painful chronic disease, to escape from the suffering of which the patient has fled to this resource. As regards the effects of the habitual use of the drug on the mass of the people, I must affirm that no injurious results are visible. The people are generally a muscular and well formed race, the labouring portion being capable of great and prolonged exertion under a fierce sun, in an unhealthy climate’

“The picture drawn by the opponents of opium is that those who are in the habit of using it are a set of degraded, depraved, miserable wretches, enfeebled in mind and body, unfit for the active duties of life—thieves, vagabonds, and beggars. They do not admit—or, at any rate, never refer to the possibility of—the existence of moderate consumers, who, although they take their daily dose, are not only none the worse for it, but are actually benefited. Yet we know from numerous unimpeachable witnesses that the abuse of opium by the Chinese is the exception and its moderate and beneficial use is the rule.

“Turning now to the evidence as to the effect of opium consumption by the people of India, we find that early in 1892 a Parliamentary blue book (c. 6562) was published on this subject. It contains the reply of the Government of India to a memorial of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, complaining of the increased consumption of the drug in India—a complaint which has been triumphantly disproved. This blue book contains the opinions of experienced officers engaged in the administration of the country, writing from their own personal knowledge, which it was a part of their duty to acquire, as to the effects of opium consumption on the people of India.

“The evidence of these officers from every part of India is singularly unanimous, and it completely establishes the contention that it is the abuse and not the use of opium which is harmful, that moderate use is the rule, and that excess is the exception.

"The most eminent medical officers in India have testified to the same effect. The only province in which the local authorities have given a contrary opinion is Burma, and even there they declare that 'there are large numbers of the non-Burmese community (Chinese and Indians), constituting, perhaps, the most thriving and industrious section of the population, to whom the drug is a necessity of life and by whom it is rarely abused'

"We have, then, a great *consensus* of opinion arrived at by a number of independent persons of high character and reputation, gentlemen of ability and integrity, who have attained to responsible positions, in which they have had the best opportunities of ascertaining the truth, whose duty it has been to state the truth, and who have had no personal interest in perverting it. They deliberately declare that the daily use of opium in moderation is not only harmless, but of positive benefit, and frequently even a necessity of life, that this moderate use is the rule, and that excess is the exception. On the other hand, we are told by a society, chiefly consisting of Englishmen who have no personal knowledge of the facts, that all this evidence goes for nothing, and that the use of opium, except for strictly medicinal purposes, is an unmitigated evil, and ruins every one who habitually has resort to it. If we accept this view, which differentiates opium from every other stimulant used by great masses of people, we must believe that all those experienced persons who have testified to the direct contrary are either grossly incapable or grossly dishonest. It is no use mincing words, a man must be one or the other who, having lived for years amongst an opium-consuming people, and having made a careful study of the effects of the habit, deliberately declares as the result of his inquiries that which is untrue.

"The Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade proposes—

"1 That the Bengal system of licensing the growth of the poppy and of manufacturing opium be at once stopped, except so far as may be needful for legitimate medical use

"2 That the necessary measures be at once taken, by raising the tax or otherwise, to prevent any extension of the cultivation of the poppy in Malwa, so as to compensate for the diminution of the supply from Bengal

"What is meant by 'legitimate medical use'? When we find

whole tribes of people, living in malarious and fever-stricken tracts, using the opium daily as a prophylactic, is that a legitimate medical use? Or is it intended that no one shall be permitted to purchase opium except under the written authority of a duly certificated member of the medical profession? How many of the opium consumers in India are within reach of an English doctor? Could you trust the native Baidis, Hakims, and Pansáris, the doctors and druggists of the country, with this power? Anybody with any knowledge of India would laugh at such an idea. How then are you to meet this great practical difficulty?

"It may be possible in British territory, by the exercise of despotic power, to prevent the poppy being grown, but what are 'the necessary measures' so vaguely suggested for preventing its extension in the native states? Every tyro in excise or customs administration knows that the power to raise duties on an article in large demand is limited by the means of preventing its illicit production and sale, and that if you increase the profits of smuggling, you will proportionately have to increase your preventive measures. Unless British officers and establishments were appointed to overrun the native states, and to interfere with the agricultural operations of the people, the cessation of the growth of the poppy in British territory would infallibly lead to an enormous extension of the cultivation in native states. The export thence of opium could only be prevented by customs barriers, and patrols round Rajputana and Central India, involving a line between 2000 and 3000 miles in length, and heavy expenditure on the establishments. How would the native states concerned regard such measures? I have no hesitation in saying that the discontent occasioned not only in those states, but amongst our own people, including the Sikhs—from whom the flower of our native army is recruited—would constitute a very serious political danger.

"But how are you to conciliate the native states for interference in their poppy cultivation? Will the people of India, or the people of this country, submit to be taxed in order to compensate these native states, and to reconcile their rulers to an army of British preventive officers scattered over their territories? And if you reconcile the rulers by paying them, how are you to conciliate their people, who have been accustomed for centuries to



the unrestricted use of opium? Without such preventive measures British India will be supplied with the Malwa drug, which, from its great value in a small bulk, is comparatively easy to smuggle. And these preventive measures must be of the strictest kind, involving the searching of the persons and goods of all travellers, and domiciliary visits, to detect the carriage, and prevent the storing of the drug.

"I now come to the third proposal of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade. It is as follows —

"3 That the Chinese Government be approached with proposals for diminishing the export of Malwa opium, simultaneously with the suppression of the growth of the poppy throughout China.

"I do not wish to use disrespectful language, but I can hardly speak of such a proposal with gravity. The Chinese Government, who have for centuries fulminated futile edicts, threatening the heaviest pains and penalties against the growth of the poppy and the use of opium, but whose officials have never had the will or the power to enforce them, and who are known to connive at the open and unconcealed infringement of the law, are to be 'approached' by the British Government with this request — 'Now that we are doing our best to deprive you of Indian opium, which your people for centuries have demanded on account of its superior quality, now that we have, by our restrictive measures, encouraged the growth of the poppy in China, and the home production of an inferior article, to such an extent that whole provinces are covered with its cultivation, now that we are mulcting your import customs revenue of about £2,000,000 sterling a year, will you be good enough at once to stop the cultivation in China, and deprive your people of an article which we believe to be an unmitigated evil, although there is a large body of Englishmen who, from personal experience, have testified that it is harmless to the great mass, who are moderate consumers?' How would such a request be met? If the solemn and self-possessed Chinaman has any sense of humour, by inextinguishable laughter.

"I am aware that many of the opponents of opium would also prohibit the use of alcoholic drinks in the United Kingdom, but before 'approaching' China, let the people of this country set the example, and make the liquor traffic, except for purely medicinal purposes, illegal, let them forbid by law the cultivation of the

hop plant, and the growth of barley for distillation or malting, let them forbid the import of wine and spirits from the continent of Europe and elsewhere, and then they will be in a position to 'approach' China with a prayer for the destruction of the poppy cultivation and the trade in opium

"It has been suggested that if the culture of poppy were prohibited other crops would take its place and thus supply a great part of the loss. But would the farmers of Kent be satisfied if the temperance party were to say to them, 'We will pass a law to prohibit your cultivating hops You can, however, grow potatoes or gooseberries instead'?

"It is true that a more moderate party in this country does not go the length of prohibiting the cultivation of the poppy and the manufacture of opium in Bengal. They are shocked at the direct management by the Government of these industries No question has been more fully discussed in India than this, there are volumes of correspondence relating to it, but the upshot of all these discussions has invariably been the recognition of the fact that, under any other system, the cultivation could not be so well restricted, that smuggling would be more rife, that the cultivators would be brought under influence of speculators, from which they are at present guarded, and that whatever evils now exist would be largely increased The Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade recognise this, and in the pamphlet I have quoted, declare that the proposal is entirely inadequate, and that their demand is nothing short of absolute prohibition

"India has had the advantage of drawing from England, for more than one hundred years, a number of upright, honest, and able administrators It is remarkable that there is not a single instance of an Englishman who has been directly responsible for the well-being of India, and who has had an important voice in its administration, who has ever suggested the prohibition of the cultivation of the poppy That has been left for a party of irresponsible persons in this country, whose want of knowledge is patent to every one who has studied the question on the spot.

"In conclusion, I would say to the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade—You may make this a party question, you may win votes relying on the uninstructed philanthropy of your fellow-countrymen, you may, through Parliament, use the despotic power of the British Government to destroy one of the most

valuable products of India, and subject the people to new taxation in order to supply the loss of revenue now paid chiefly by the Chinese, you may deprive hundreds of thousands of Her Majesty's Indian subjects of a prophylactic which enables them to resist fatigue, to sustain privation, and to save life, you may thereby increase suffering, sickness, and mortality, you may cover India with an army of preventive officers to watch another army of smugglers, created to satisfy a natural demand of which you have suppressed the legitimate supply, you may harass the people by personal searches and domiciliary visits, you may thus create discontent amongst our native subjects, and disaffection in the best forces of our native army, you may, by unwarranted and unprecedented interference in their internal administration, and, owing to the pecuniary losses both rulers and subjects will sustain, disgust and alienate the native states of Central India and Rajputana, our bravest and most loyal allies, you may drive the consumers of opium to alcohol and hemp, you may do all this, but you will never persuade the Chinese to follow in your footsteps, and abandon the ever-increasing culture of the poppy. In short, you may inflict on India a cruel injury, the extent and the consequences of which you are incapable of calculating, but you will fail in any way to benefit China, unless you count it a benefit greatly to extend the cultivation of the poppy and the manufacture of opium within her borders."

I can add very little to the account which has thus been given by Mr Batten. I passed thirty-eight years of my life in India, and during that time I held a great variety of offices, beginning with those of little importance, to the very highest posts in the civil service of the State. I was brought into personal communication with all classes, from the greatest princes to the humblest ryots. I endeavoured to learn the truth upon this subject, and I am entitled to say that I can speak with knowledge of the facts, both as regards the people of India and the policy of the Government. I can confirm, in every respect, Mr Batten's conclusions. Taking

India as a whole, the proportion of its vast population that is accustomed to the use of opium is extremely small. Certain classes, however, have long been in the habit of consuming it, and it is a remarkable fact that these classes include the races that are physically the finest in all India. Among them the Sikhs and Rájputs are especially conspicuous. The Sikhs are the flower of our Indian army, and one of the bulwarks of our Indian Empire, it would be difficult to find in any country of the world a more manly, handsome, and vigorous people, and their use of opium is almost universal. Statements that the consumption of opium in India has been fostered by our Government with the object of obtaining revenue are absolutely without foundation. There is little doubt that more opium was consumed in India under native rule, one hundred and fifty years ago, than now, and the stringent system of excise established by our Government has so greatly increased the price of the drug that consumption is reduced to a minimum. The danger is that this policy may be carried too far, and that, by making opium too dear and too difficult to obtain, we may not only encourage smuggling, but may cause people who have been content with the moderate and beneficial use of opium to have recourse to alcohol, or to cheaper and more noxious stimulants, the consumption of which no Government can prevent.

As regards China, as Mr Batten has shown, the population practically depends for the supply of opium not upon the imports from India but on that produced at home. If all that were said about the ruin of the Chinese by opium were true, instead of being, as it is, altogether false, the prohibition of the imports from India would afford no remedy. If the richer classes in China were deprived of Indian opium they would suffer

as the richer classes in Europe would suffer if they were deprived of the choice vintages of Bordeaux and Burgundy, or as tobacco-smokers would suffer if no more cigars were to come from Cuba. In such a case, in our own country, the frequenters of public-houses would be conscious of no hardship, and the vast majority of the opium-smokers of China would be equally unconscious if they received no more opium from India. If, in deference to ignorant prejudice, India should be deprived of the revenue which she now obtains from opium, an act of folly and injustice would be perpetrated as gross as any that has ever been inflicted by a foreign Government on a subject country. India now possesses the rare fortune of obtaining from one of her most useful products a large revenue without the imposition of taxes on her own people, and we are asked to sacrifice the manifest and vital interests of these people, to whose good we are pledged by the highest duties, in hope of protecting others, against their will, from imaginary evils; in other words, to inflict certain injury where we have the power, in pursuit of a benevolent chimera which must elude us. Truly, to use the words of Condorcet, "*l'enthousiaste ignorant est la plus terrible des bêtes féroces*"

Mr Batten has brought out very clearly the essential fact, usually altogether ignored, that the revenue derived from opium exported to China constitutes a comparatively small part of the Indian interests involved. There has been much idle talk about the readiness of England to bear, in whole or in part, the loss that the suppression of the cultivation and sale of opium would cause. It would be waste of words to say much regarding a proposition which it

is certain will never be carried into effect England, which levied in 1900-1901 a revenue of £32,700,000 from alcoholic liquors, and whose "drink-bill" is said to amount to more than £150,000,000 a year, would never be guilty of such extravagant and hypocritical folly as to think of paying for the suppression of opium cultivation in India But it is well that English people should understand that no money payment, however large, could make good to India the loss of this great industry If England were to make to her a free gift of £100,000,000, or indeed much more, it would be no compensation for the material injury that she would suffer, and still less could there be compensation for the ruinous political consequences that would inevitably follow

In 1893, a year after Mr Batten's paper and the greater part of the present chapter were written, a Royal Commission under the presidency of Lord Brassey was appointed, in accordance with a Resolution of the House of Commons, to inquire into the whole subject of the cultivation of the poppy in India and the manufacture and sale of opium The Commission met in Calcutta in November 1893, it spent several months in India, it visited many parts of the country, and examined more than 700 witnesses, of whom 466 were natives of India or China and 257 Europeans The Commission submitted its report in April 1895 Its work was mainly devoted to an inquiry into the facts connected with the consumption of opium in India China was not directly included in the order of reference, nor was that country visited by the Commission In regard to India, the report of the Commission and the voluminous evidence taken by it so entirely confirmed the conclusions stated by

Mr. Batten and by myself that reference to it in detail is needless, nor have I thought it necessary to make any changes in this chapter as it was originally written. No change whatever was recommended by the Commission in the principles on which the administration of the opium revenue is carried on in India, and no change has been made. In regard to China, comparatively little evidence was taken by the Commission, but its conclusions, so far as they were stated in its report, were the same as those given in Mr Batten's paper.

"On a review," it said, "of the whole evidence in regard to opium-smoking among the Chinese, we conclude that the habit is generally practised in moderation, and that when so practised injurious effects are not apparent, but that when the habit is carried to excess, disastrous consequences, both moral and physical, inevitably follow. Assuming this conclusion to be well founded, we may fairly compare the effects of opium-smoking among the Chinese to those of alcoholic liquors in the United Kingdom. Upon the general question, the position which Great Britain may properly take up is clearly put by Mr O'Connor, Her Majesty's representative at Peking, in his covering letter addressed to the Commission. He says 'If the use of the drug in China depended on the supply received from India it might be a practical question what measures could or ought to be taken to discourage its importation. But this is not the issue. The quantity of opium grown in China is increasing enormously. Even the nominal prohibition of the cultivation of the poppy no longer exists throughout the whole empire, and were the importation of Indian opium to be stopped, China would in a few years so increase her production, as not only to supply her own wants, but probably to export opium to foreign countries.'"

I may leave this subject with the following quotation from one whose knowledge and authority no one can call in question —

"In speaking of the occasional sources of friction between

China and ourselves, I do not allude to the opium question, which, in the hands of enthusiastic or prejudiced ignorance in London, has been presented to English audiences in a guise that excites a smile in every Treaty Port in China. There, at least, everybody knows that the helpless Celestial is neither being forced nor befooled by an insidious and immoral Government at Calcutta, that if not an ounce of Indian opium ever again passed through a Chinese custom-house, Chinamen would go on smoking their own inferior drug as keenly as ever, and that the pretence that China is hostile to the British people or to Christian missions because we introduced to her the opium habit (which she had already practised for centuries), is about as rational as to say that the national soreness that sometimes arises between England and France is due to our resentment at having to cross the Channel for our best brandy."

"Indian opium," Lord Curzon adds, "is only smoked by about two in every thousand of the population"<sup>1</sup>

There remain to be briefly noticed a few other heads of revenue not derived from taxation

In 1908-9, £1,700,000 was received under the head of Forests. This revenue was derived from the sale of timber and other produce from the Government forests, but more than half of it was spent on forest conservancy and other charges necessary for the preservation of the forests, and the net income in 1908-9 was only £706,000. Before the transfer of the Government to the Crown, practically nothing had been done towards the preservation of the forests of India, which are very extensive and valuable, and their destruction was rapidly going on. They cover altogether some 240,000 square miles. In 1861 a separate Forest department was created. Up to 1909 more than 94,000 square miles of forests had been demarcated, and strictly reserved for the benefit of the public under the management of officers who have received special scientific instruction in forestry in England and in Germany

<sup>1</sup> *Problems of the East*, by the Hon George N Curzon, M P, 1894



that the import of foreign opium into China could be restricted either in Chinese ports through the agency of the maritime customs department, or in the country of export. The first method, however, would require the consent of all the Treaty powers and a formal convention. The Indian Government was willing to adopt the second, if it was preferred, and thus dispense with the formalities and possible delays of diplomacy. His Majesty's Government accordingly proposed that the Indian Government should restrict by degrees the export of opium from India to countries beyond the seas, in such a way as to extinguish completely within ten years the Indian opium traffic with China. Such restriction was to be conditional upon the progressive reduction of the production of opium in China, and in order to ensure the observance of this condition it was proposed to limit the mutual undertaking to a term of three years in the first instance. The Chinese Government agreed that restriction in India of the export trade would meet its object, and undertook to satisfy the Indian Government at the end of three years that production in China had been reduced by three-tenths. During the five years 1901-5 the average total annual export of opium from India to countries beyond seas had been 67,000 chests, of which 51,000 had been taken by China. On this basis a progressive reduction of 5100 chests a year in the total export would in ten years extinguish the trade with China, leaving only an export of 16,000 chests a year, the whole of which would, it was assumed, be still required by other countries. Accordingly the Indian Government undertook to limit, with effect from the 1st January 1908, the total export of opium to 61,900 chests in 1908, 56,800 chests in 1909, and 51,700 chests in 1910. This undertaking has been carried out. As regards the reciprocal action to be taken in China by the Chinese Government, that Government is not in a position to prove statistically that the production of opium in the empire has been reduced by three-tenths. Such evidence as there is is necessarily of a general nature, and consists mainly of reports of British consular officers and missionaries dwelling in the interior as to the extent to which the cultivation of the poppy has been suppressed. In some provinces very vigorous action has been taken by the viceroys and their subordinates, in others the proclamations and regulations issued by the Imperial Government have been lightly regarded. But the general tenor of the information undoubtedly is that taking the empire as a whole the production of opium has been largely reduced, and that the central Government is sincerely desirous of carrying out to the end the policy of extirpating the production of opium and the opium habit. It is probably safe to assume that the agreement on which the Indian Government has been acting will be continued for the full period of ten years. In 1919 the entire opium traffic of India beyond seas will in

this event be restricted to 16,000 chests a year—a quantity for which there is at present a market in other countries.

The arrangement with China which has been described means a serious loss of revenue to the Indian Government and to the opium cultivators in British India. It also places that Government in a difficult position as regards the native states in which opium is produced and from which its export beyond seas has hitherto been unrestricted, though subject to the payment of a "pass" or transit duty to the British Indian Government.

The net revenue from opium in the five years ending 1908 averaged £3,690,000 a year. Roughly speaking, three-fourths of this will disappear by 1918 with the extinction of the Chinese trade. This loss of £2,700,000 a year will be brought about gradually, as the limit to the permissible export of opium annually contracts, until what was a trade of 67,000 chests is brought down to a trade of not more than 16,000 chests. In the budget of 1910-11, with a view to strengthening the financial position against the prospective loss of the revenue from opium, the Indian Government has provided £1,126,000 additional revenue by means of new taxation (chiefly by higher Customs duties). Unless existing sources of revenue prove exceptionally fruitful, or economies in expenditure should be found possible, further additional taxation to take the place of the opium revenue will as time goes on be inevitable.

In reducing year by year the limit of permissible export the Government has had to deal with two sources of supply. Of the 67,000 chests which were exported annually in the years preceding 1908, 48,000 chests consisted of Bengal opium and 19,000 of Malwa opium. Over the supply of Bengal opium the Government has complete control. The opium is grown for it by cultivators under agreements, and after being manufactured is sold by it at auction to exporters. By reducing the area licensed for poppy growing, and by manufacturing and selling less opium, the export of Bengal opium can be brought down to any required point. It is no doubt a hardship to cultivators who have relied in the past on the profits of growing opium for the state, to lose this source of income. But on the opium lands wheat and other remunerative crops can be grown, and on account of the rise in recent years of general prices opium is not as profitable a crop as it once was. The reduction of the export of Bengal opium therefore presents no very serious administrative difficulties, if made gradually and considerably. As regards Malwa opium the position is different. Up to 1908 the producers and exporters of opium in native states could export from India to countries beyond seas without any restriction as to amount. Beyond levying the "pass" or transit duty the British Indian Government had no concern with the

difficult to prevent evasion of the duty, the manufacture of salt has now been prohibited in the maritime tracts of Bengal. Owing to the fact that the exports from India are largely in excess of the imports, freights to India are very low, and salt costs little to import. The tax in Bengal is levied as an import duty at the port of entry. Before 1888 nearly all the salt consumed in Bengal was brought from Cheshire, but in consequence principally of a great increase in the price of English salt caused by the action of the salt syndicate, a large supply is now furnished by Arabia, Aden, Spain and Germany. Increased facilities of inland communication have also encouraged the displacement of foreign salt by salt manufactured in other Indian provinces.

In Madras and Bombay, although the facilities for communication with other countries are equally great, foreign salt does not compete with that produced locally, for the manufacture of salt from the sea by solar evaporation is an easy process. The duty in Madras is collected partly as an excise from licensed private factories, and partly under a monopoly by which salt is manufactured in state factories and sold at a price which gives a profit equal to the duty. In Bombay the duty is levied as an excise.

The United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and parts of the Central Provinces and of the Punjab, derive their chief supply of salt from lakes or springs impregnated with salt in the native states of Rájputána. The salt is prepared by solar evaporation at works controlled by the Government. Farther north, the greater part of the Punjab is supplied from rock-salt, which is found in inexhaustible quantities. The salt is extracted and sold by the Government, the duty being included in the selling price. In Burma the greater part of the salt

comes from England and Germany, and from Madras, there is also a considerable local manufacture

Until 1882-83, the amount of duty varied in different provinces. It was higher in Bengal than in Madras and Bombay. So long as there were no railways and few roads, the inconvenience of these different rates was not much felt, but as communication improved, it became more and more impossible to prevent salt taxed at a lower rate from coming into provinces where the tax was higher, and a system gradually grew up in India to which, for extraordinary folly, it would be hard to find a parallel.

In 1843, with the object of shutting out the cheaper salt from provinces where it had been made artificially dear, and of keeping out from British territory the untaxed salt of native states, the establishment of an inland customs line was commenced, and by 1870 it had extended itself across the whole of British India from a point north of Attock, on the Indus, to the Máhánadí, on the borders of Madras, a distance of 2500 miles. Along the greater part of its length it was a huge material barrier, which Sir M. E. Grant Duff, speaking from personal observation, said could be compared to nothing else in the world except the great wall of China, it consisted chiefly of an immense impenetrable hedge of thorny trees and bushes, supplemented by stone walls and ditches, across which no human being or beast of burden or vehicle could pass without being subjected to detention and search. If this customs line had been put down in Europe, it would have stretched, in 1869, from Moscow to Gibraltar. It was guarded by an army of officers and men, some 12,000 in number, divided into beats which were constantly patrolled by night and day, and were watched

from 1700 guard-posts. It may easily be imagined what obstruction to trade, what abuses and oppression, what annoyance and harassment to individuals, took place. The interference was not confined to traffic passing into the British provinces, or to salt alone, for an export duty was levied on sugar produced in our own territories when it passed from British territory into native states, and sometimes when it passed from one part of British territory to another. This was a most objectionable and indeed irrational tax, levied as it was on one of the most important agricultural staples of our own provinces. Obstructions were thus offered to traffic from whichever direction it came.

It was impossible to get rid of this inland customs line while the salt tax was levied at different rates in different provinces, and until we had the means of controlling the manufacture and taxation of salt produced in the great salt tracts of the native states and brought into our own territories.

The first steps towards a better system were taken by the Government of Lord Mayo in 1869. An amicable arrangement was ably and successfully negotiated by Mr A. O. Hume with the native states of Jaipur and Jodhpur, under which we acquired the sole right of manufacturing salt at the Sámbar salt lake, the chief of the salt sources of Rájputána, and from which a large proportion of the supply of northern India is derived.

No further steps were taken until 1873, but in that year (I am quoting from a despatch of the Government of India), "Mr G. H. M. Batten, the Commissioner of Inland Customs, first suggested to the Government that inquiries should be made and negotiations entered into with a view to the British Government being

enabled to levy an excise duty on salt at the principal places of production in Rájputána, and to suppress or restrict all other salt manufacture in the native states. He pointed out that by this measure, and this measure alone, would it become possible to remove the inland customs line." The Government of Lord Northbrook then entered into an arrangement with Jodhpur, by which all the important salt sources of that state were transferred to British management. An important reduction was also made in the length of the customs line in its southern section, where it passed through British territory only.

In 1878, under the Government of Lord Lytton, by my own advice, the export duty on sugar was abolished, and in the following year the inland customs line finally disappeared. It was still, at that time, 1500 miles long, a distance as great as that from London to Constantinople, and its existence was declared by Lord Lytton to be a great political and commercial scandal. There is nothing in my Indian life that I remember with more satisfaction than the fact that it was my good fortune, as finance member of the Government, to help Lord Lytton in carrying to completion the reform of a system which for many years I had denounced.

The abolition of the customs line was rendered possible by two measures. By the first the duties on salt throughout India, although for financial reasons they could not be at once completely equalised, were made to approximate so nearly that salt could not profitably be taken from one province to another. By the second measure agreements were entered into with the native states of Rájputána and Central India, under which the British Government obtained leases and control of all the more important sources of salt manufacture. Liberal

compensation was given to the chiefs of the native states for loss of revenue. These measures led almost immediately to a large increase in the consumption of salt and to a large increase of revenue<sup>1</sup>

The final completion of these reforms, by the equalisation of the salt duties throughout India at a reduced rate, was reserved for Sir Evelyn Baring, now Lord Cromer, as finance member of the Government of Lord Ripon. In 1882 the duty was fixed at two rupees per maund (82 lbs.)

The measures that have been described had as their ultimate object much more than the removal of the inland customs line, and the equalisation of the duties upon salt. That object was explained by myself in 1877, in the legislative council, on behalf of the Government of India, to be that of giving to the people throughout India the means of obtaining an unlimited supply of salt at the cheapest possible cost, I said that the interests of the people and of the public revenue were identical, and that the only just and wise system was to levy a low rate of duty on an unrestricted consumption. That policy was not long maintained. In January 1888 the salt tax was raised to two and a half rupees per maund, and so it remained for the next fifteen years. Neither in the consumption of salt nor in the revenue was the progress satisfactory. In March 1903 the tax was reduced by the Government of Lord Curzon to its former rate of two rupees. In 1905 it was further reduced to one and a half rupees, and in 1907 to one rupee.

<sup>1</sup> This account of a great reform would not be complete without some reference to the eminent services of Mr A O Hume, Sir Alfred Lyall, and Sir Henry Daly, who conducted the negotiations with the native states, and to those of Mr G H M Batten, who, at the headquarters of the Government of India, was, in regard to all the questions involved, its chief adviser.

The temptation is great in times of financial pressure to have recourse to the expedient of increasing the duty on salt. The vast majority of the people on whom the tax falls are probably unaware of the existence of the tax. The masses remain unmoved and silent, while the small and wealthier minority, who alone can make their voices heard, give loud approval to measures which impose no appreciable obligation upon themselves. No efforts should be spared to reduce to the utmost the price of salt throughout India, and thereby to stimulate consumption. Nor is this policy desirable merely for the reason, essentially important as this is, that the cost to the poor of one of the necessities of life should not needlessly be enhanced, but because it will certainly, from a purely financial point of view, be advantageous. Nor should it be forgotten that a time of extreme political emergency may come when a large and immediate addition to the revenues is necessary, and when fresh direct and unpopular taxation cannot possibly be imposed. In such circumstances, the tax on salt might, if it were very low, and the consumption of salt were unrestricted, be temporarily increased without serious objection, for the Government would thus be able to obtain, by a small increase of duty, large additional resources, almost without the knowledge of the people. Salt ought to be looked on as a financial reserve, which might be drawn upon in case of urgent necessity, but not otherwise. I do not assert, nor do I believe, that the tax at the rate which prevailed from 1888 to 1903 was felt as an actual hardship by the people, but its reduction in 1903 and again in 1905 was one of the wisest measures of the Government of Lord Curzon. The further reduction of the duty to one rupee per maund by the Government



of Lord Minto has made salt cheaper in India than it ever was before. Between 1903 and 1908 consumption increased by 25 per cent, and is still increasing.

The duty on salt is the only obligatory tax which falls upon the masses of the population, and although they are very poor it is not a serious burden. It is equivalent to an annual tax of about twopence halfpenny per head. The case was very different once, when high duties, unwise policy, and, above all, imperfect means of communication, made it impossible for the poorest classes in some parts of India to obtain a sufficient supply of salt.

In the existing conditions of India a moderate tax upon salt is open in principle to little objection. The reasons for this conclusion were summed up by the Duke of Argyll, when Secretary of State for India, in a passage which I cannot do better than quote —

“On all grounds of general principles, salt is a perfectly legitimate subject of taxation. It is impossible in any country to reach the masses of the population by direct taxes. If they are to contribute at all to the expenditure of the State, it must be through taxes levied upon some articles of universal consumption. If such taxes are fairly adjusted, a revenue can thus be raised, not only with less consciousness on the part of the people, but with less real hardship upon them than in any other way whatever. There is no other article in India answering this description upon which any tax is levied. It appears to be the only one which, at present, in that country can occupy the place which is held in our own financial system by the great articles of consumption from which a large part of the imperial revenue is derived. I am of opinion, therefore, that the salt tax in India must continue to be regarded as a legitimate and important branch of the public revenue. It is the duty, however, of the Government to see that such taxes are not so heavy as to bear unjustly on the poor by amounting to a very large percentage upon their necessary expenditure. The best test whether an

indirect tax is open to this objection is to be found in its effect upon consumption"<sup>1</sup>

The Stamp revenue is derived partly from stamps on commercial papers, and partly from fees, levied by means of stamps, on proceedings in the judicial courts. It was estimated to amount in 1909-10 to £4,552,000. Of this about £1,400,000 is derived from commercial stamps, and the rest from court fees.

The revenue under the head of Excise is derived from duties on spirits and intoxicating drugs. Tobacco, which is grown in almost every village and is consumed by nearly every man in India, and by very many women, is subject to no duty. The people of India generally are extremely abstemious. The consumption of spirits is for the most part confined to the lower classes, and though of late years from various causes it has tended to increase, the Government of India are still able to affirm that "except possibly in a few isolated localities the evils arising from drink in India are not to be compared with what may be seen in any town in the United Kingdom." Whereas in the United Kingdom there is one liquor shop to about 250 of the population, in no province in India is the proportion less than one to 2200, and in the largest provinces a very much higher proportion prevails. There has undoubtedly been a large and steady increase in the excise revenue. In 1870 it was less than £1,250,000, in 1880 it was £2,840,000, in 1900-1901 it

<sup>1</sup> Despatch to Government of India, January 21, 1869. [It may be added that the levy of a revenue from salt is by no means confined to India, but forms a feature of the fiscal system in not a few of the leading countries of Europe. In the financial statement for 1908-9 the Government of India summarised the information which they had collected on this point. In France the revenue from the taxation of comestible salt works out to 8d per head of the population, in Germany to 11d., in Austria Hungary to 1s 2d, in Italy to 2s, and in the Netherlands to 6d.]

was £3,937,000, and in 1908-9 it was £6,390,000. The advocates of temperance have seen in these figures evidence that the Government, with the object of obtaining revenue, provides, in defiance of native opinion, constantly increasing facilities for drinking. The Government on its part denies that there is any foundation for these assertions. It admits that from causes that have no connection with the excise administration, but are chiefly due to the growth of large industrial towns, there is a tendency for consumption of liquor to increase among certain classes of the population. But it confidently appeals to statistics in support of the contention that the principal cause of the increase of revenue has been improved administration and the suppression of illicit distillation and sale. In 1890, in summing up the results of a full enquiry into the working of the excise system, the Government of India put the case as follows —

“Few subjects have of recent years obtained greater attention at the hands of the Government than questions relating to excise administration. In each of the three larger Governments the excise system has, within the last six or seven years, been completely examined in its operation and in its effects. These examinations have been made under the instructions of the local Governments, and in direct communication with us, and the principles on which they have been based, and which have been unanimously accepted by all the authorities concerned, have been these: that liquor should be taxed and consumption restricted, as far as it is possible to do so without imposing positive hardships upon the people and driving them to illicit manufacture. The facts now placed on record show that in this policy the local Governments have been completely successful, and that the great increase of excise revenue in recent years, which has been taken as evidence of the spread of drinking habits, really represents a much smaller consumption of liquor, and an infinitely better regulated consumption, than the smaller revenue of former years.

“There is not the slightest reason to imagine that in the days of native administration the Indian populations refrained from indulgence in a practice which it requires the constant watchfulness of the British administration to prevent. Under the Muhammadan administration, which immediately preceded the British rule, the facilities for drinking were very much greater than have ever since existed, and the prevalence of drinking habits was quite as much complained of. The reports of the Chief Commissioners of the Central Provinces and of Assam prove that it is precisely those tribes and races which have been the least accessible to the influences of British rule which are most addicted to intoxicating drinks and drugs. We have at the present day ample evidence on this very point in the conflict between the British and native excise systems wherever British and native territory meet. These are the only points where the British system breaks down, because the restrictions imposed upon manufacture and consumption on the British side of such frontiers are not met by equivalent restrictions on the other side. One of the main difficulties which the excise authorities have to meet is that of excluding from British territory the more lightly taxed and more easily obtained spirit available in native states.

“It is only by strong preventive establishments that illicit distillation can be prevented. The great increase in the revenue does not mark the extension of drinking habits, but is the result of a great and general increase in the rate of tax, which it would have been entirely impossible to realise but for the great improvement in preventive measures which has accompanied it. In fact, the ability of the Excise department to prevent illicit distillation is the only limit which is imposed in practice to increase in the rate of taxation.”

In 1905 the working of the system was made the subject of a detailed enquiry by an Excise Committee. The report, while making many valuable recommendations for its improvement, confirmed the view that the large increase of revenue which had taken place was in a much greater degree due to increase of taxation and improved administration than to increased consumption. In the same year Mr Baker, the finance member,

is more just than in India, but there has been difficulty in imposing and maintaining it, because it has been opposed by the richest and most powerful classes, who alone can make their voices heard. It has long been a reproach to our administration that they have borne no fair proportion of the public burdens. The official classes, in the absence of direct taxation, contribute almost nothing. The mercantile and professional classes derive, from the security which they enjoy, greater benefits from our government than any other part of the community, but they have paid almost nothing for its support, except when direct taxation has been imposed upon them. Even the land, although it provides so large a portion of the public revenues, sometimes fails to contribute anything like an adequate amount, the most notorious example of this fact is seen in Bengal, where the zemindars, in the richest province of the empire, not only, in consequence of mistakes made more than a century ago, pay an altogether insufficient sum as land revenue, but remain in great measure exempt from taxation. Much has been said about the unpopularity of an income tax in India. It is undoubtedly disliked by those who have to pay it; but out of the 232,000,000 people in British India, less than 300,000 are liable to the tax, and no such term as unpopular can reasonably be applied to it. I do not undervalue the fact that the small minority on which the income tax falls is politically the most influential section of the whole community, but its discontent is a less evil than the injustice of allowing it almost entirely to escape taxation. Temptations are never wanting in India for Governments to earn for themselves an apparent popularity by a refusal to impose taxes on the richer and more influential classes of the community,

and while these, the only audible critics, approve, it is not difficult to find acceptable reasons for a course essentially impolitic and unjust. The real foundations of our power do not rest on the interested approval of the noisy few, but in justice and on the contentment of the silent millions.

The revenue under the head of Registration is not very important in amount. It is derived from fees levied on instruments brought for registration, in some cases, when immovable property above a certain value is affected, the registration of documents is obligatory, in other cases it is optional.

prevented immediate action, but in the financial statement, March 1878, an important step, not only towards the abolition of the duties on cotton goods, but towards the complete freedom of trade, was announced. A declaration was then made by myself, as finance member of the Council, of the principles which the Government of India intended to carry out gradually as circumstances allowed —

“It is not necessary to discuss the advantages to a country of free trade, and the disadvantage of protective duties. It is sufficient to say that these have been admitted for many years by the statesmen who, of whatever party, have guided the policy of the United Kingdom. The principles on which the customs legislation of the United Kingdom has been based are now admitted axioms by all who recognise the theoretic advantages of free trade. These principles are, as regards imports

“1 That no duty should exist which affords protection to native industry, and, as a corollary, that no duty should be applied to any article which can be produced at home without an equivalent duty of excise on the home production, also, that no duty should be levied except for purely fiscal purposes

“2 That, as far as possible, the raw materials of industry and articles contributing to production should be exempt from customs taxation

“3 That duties should be applied only to articles which yield a revenue of sufficient importance to justify the interference with trade involved by the machinery of collection

“As regards exports. That duties should be levied on those commodities only in which the exporting country has practically a monopoly of production.

“These principles are of general application, but in the case of India they possess a peculiar significance. India is a country of unbounded material resources, but her people are a poor people. Its characteristics are great power of production, but almost total absence of accumulated capital. On this account alone the prosperity of the country essentially depends on its being able to secure a large and favourable outlet for its surplus produce. But there is a special feature in the economic conditions of India

which renders this a matter of yet more pressing and even of vital importance. This is the fact that her connection with England, and the financial results of that connection, compel her to send to Europe every year about £20,000,000 sterling worth of her products without receiving in return any direct commercial equivalent. This excess of exports over imports is really the return for the foreign capital, in its broadest sense, invested in India, including, under capital, not only money, but all advantages which have to be paid for, such as the intelligence, strength, and energy on which good administration and commercial prosperity depend. From these causes the trade of India is in an abnormal position, preventing her from receiving, in the shape of imported merchandise and treasure, the full commercial benefit which otherwise would spring from her vast material resources. The comparatively undeveloped condition of the trade of India may be illustrated by the following figures —The value of the imports and exports, taken together, per head of the population is in the United Kingdom about £20. In British India it is about 10s. The customs revenue on the few articles now retained in the import tariff of the United Kingdom is about 12s per head, while that of India, on all the articles of its lengthy tariff, is about 3d, showing that, small as is the proportion of the foreign trade of India to that of England, the proportion of customs revenue derived from it is smaller still. Here then is a country which, both from its poverty, the primitive and monotonous condition of its industrial life, and the peculiar character of its political condition, requires from its Government, before all things, the most economical treatment of its resources, and, therefore, the greatest possible freedom in its foreign exchanges."

Excluding the duties levied on salt and liquors, which corresponded to the internal excise duties imposed on those articles, the Indian import duties yielded at that time (1876-77) £1,275,000, and £811,000 of this was derived from cotton goods. Apart from the latter sum there remained, therefore, only £464,000 levied from a multitude of articles, many of which yielded an insignificant revenue. It was clear that after the abolition of the duties on



In March 1894, the Government of India, in consequence of financial pressure caused by the fall in the gold value of the rupee, considered fresh taxation to be unavoidable, and the least objectionable method by which they could increase the public revenues appeared to them to be the re-imposition of duties upon imports. The tariff of 1875, under which, with the exception of the precious metals, almost everything imported into India was subject to a duty of 5 per cent, was with some modifications restored. Two important changes were made. Silver bullion was included among dutiable articles, and cotton goods were excepted. This exemption of cotton goods from taxation lasted, however, for a short time only. In December 1894 a 5 per cent import duty was imposed on cotton goods and yarns, and a countervailing excise duty of 5 per cent *ad valorem* was imposed on cotton fabrics manufactured at power mills in India. In February 1896 these duties were again revised. Cotton yarns were freed from duty. A duty of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent *ad valorem* was imposed on cotton manufactured goods imported from abroad, and a corresponding excise duty at the same rate was imposed on goods manufactured at mills in India. In 1910 these duties were still levied.

In 1908-9, the total value of all imports by sea into India was £101,015,000. This amount included Government transactions, stores, valued at £5,008,000, and gold and silver valued at £75,000. The private imports were merchandise valued at £80,844,000, and gold and silver valued at £15,088,000.

If we exclude salt, as the duty levied on it belongs to the salt revenue not to customs, and if we also set aside those articles of private merchandise on which duties are necessarily levied, or which are levied for

special reasons,—arms and ammunition, and liquors—the value of the remaining articles liable to duty was about £65,000,000. The value of the imports of cotton fabrics, almost entirely of British manufacture, was nearly £23,000,000, or about 28 per cent of the total imports of private merchandise. The customs duties on imports, in 1908-9, yielded altogether £3,987,000. If from this is deducted the duty collected on silver bullion, and the duties on arms, ammunition, and liquors, there remains £2,822,000. This may be taken to represent the yield of the import duties on dutiable articles of an ordinary character. The cotton duties contributed £787,000, or about 27 per cent of this total. In other years fully one-third has been contributed by these duties. The Indian import tariff now comprises nearly 400 specified articles, but the actual number of dutiable articles is much larger, because duties are levied on all other articles, manufactured or unmanufactured, except a few specially exempted<sup>1</sup>. In the words of the official reporter on the trade returns of India, “though the Indian tariff comprises a lengthy list of dutiable articles, there are but few on which individually any revenue of importance is collected, these are spirituous liquors, petroleum, sugar, metals, including silver, and cotton piece goods. These yield three-fourths of the whole revenue. Cotton piece goods are much the most important source of revenue in the tariff.”

I have shown that at one time there was no country in which trade was so free from all burdens as India. Whether the re-imposition and maintenance of a

<sup>1</sup> The more important among the articles exempted from duty are the following—living animals, printed books, hops, grain, machinery, gold bullion and coin, coal, printing material, railway material, ships, raw wool. On certain manufactures of iron a duty of 1 per cent only is imposed.

Brussels Sugar Convention, and are practically obsolete. Meanwhile sugar is imported into India in increasing quantities, while the production continues on the same scale as in the past. From this it is evident that the country is unable to produce all the sugar which the vast population requires. The increased consumption of this article is one of many indications of the improved condition of the masses.

The conditions under which the foreign trade of India is carried on are peculiar.

It is probable that out of nearly 300,000,000 people inhabiting India, at least 200,000,000 are more or less directly dependent upon agriculture for support. Great manufacturing industries have hardly any existence except when they have been established by European capital or under European influence.

There is hardly one of the principal agricultural staples of the world which is not or may not be produced in India. The products both of the temperate and tropical zone find, in one or more of the regions within her boundaries, the climate, soil, and all other conditions that they require. The power of cheap agricultural production in India, and her capacity for supplying to other countries food-stuffs and raw materials for manufacture, are practically unlimited, while the capacity of Europe to consume is, or may become, as large as that of India to produce.

Almost everything that the people of India desire to meet their simple requirements is produced at home. This is true even of the comparatively rich, to the great majority of whom the wants and luxuries of European life are unknown. It is not so much the general poverty of the people, as the peculiar and slowly changing character of the social and industrial conditions under

which they live, that confines within narrow channels their demands for the productions of other countries. The principal articles of general consumption which, in the absence of fiscal or other impediments, they can often obtain from abroad more cheaply than they can produce them, are clothing, simple metal manufactures, and metals as materials for their own industries. But there is one other important demand that cannot be supplied except from foreign sources. There has always been a flow into India of the precious metals, and centuries of disorder and oppression, the lessons of which are not soon forgotten, have led the people to invest their savings in what seems to them the safest form. Large quantities of gold and silver are thus constantly required for the purpose of hoarding. These hoards are kept for the most part in coin, but also in the shape of personal ornaments. It often surprises Englishmen to see the profusion of gold and silver bangles and other jewellery with which the women even of the humbler classes deck themselves on occasions of festivity. In the five years ending with 1910, the value of the net imports on private account of silver alone into India was nearly £29,000,000. As no silver is coined on private account, the whole of these imports must have gone into ornaments or hoards. During the same period the net imports of gold, together with the gold produced in the country, amounted to about £50,000,000. A considerable portion of these imports came in the form of sovereigns which went into the currency; but a good deal was bullion which, as there is no coinage of gold in India, must have been imported for other purposes. Even when gold is added to the currency in the form of sovereigns, it disappears from active circulation. In November 1908 the stock of sovereigns in

absolutely beyond its control “The financial position,” Sir David Barbour wrote in March 1893, “is at the mercy of exchange, and of those who have it in their power to affect in any way the price of silver. If we budget for the present deficit of 15,950,000 rupees, and Exchange rises one penny, we shall have a surplus, if it falls a penny, we shall have a deficit of more than 30,000,000 rupees, if we impose taxation to the extent of 15,000,000 rupees, a turn of the wheel may require us to impose further taxation of not less magnitude, another turn and we may find that no taxation at all was required. What we have got to consider in making our arrangements for next year is not so much the question of increasing the public revenue, or restricting that portion of the public expenditure which is under our control, but the chances of a settlement of the currency question.”

Writing on this subject in 1888, I used the following language —“No one can say where this continuous depreciation of silver is to stop, or when we shall see the end of the constantly recurring increase in the liabilities of the Government which follows as the inevitable result. Recourse has already been had to taxes that are economically objectionable, and which place fresh burdens upon the poorer classes, and we are perilously near the time in which we may be called on to adopt measures which may be politically dangerous or inexpedient. We have hitherto never introduced into India any strange and unpopular taxation affecting the masses of the population. If we were to change this policy, and were to impose heavy burdens of a kind hitherto unknown, our position might become very different from what it has been in the past. Our difficulties would be seriously increased if such burdens were to meet charges from

which the Indian taxpayer derived no benefit, the nature of which he was unable to understand, and which were the direct result of the existence of a foreign dominion. But the truth is that, for such a state of things as that which exists, no readjustment of Indian taxation could afford a remedy. Even if India were a country like Great Britain, where the public revenues, in case of necessity, can almost at any moment be largely increased, she would find, while her standard of value differed from that of England, and while the gold value of silver continued to fall, no relief from pouring into the bottomless pit of her treasury constantly increasing supplies of silver. No language that I could use would be too strong to express my sense of the gravity of this question. There is no Indian authority who does not feel that, if it be allowed to drift on in the future as it has drifted in the past, we may some day find ourselves in a position not only of extreme financial difficulty but of political peril."

The serious anticipations thus expressed were soon fully verified, and in 1892 the Government of India submitted proposals to the Secretary of State for stopping the free coinage of silver in India, with a view to the introduction of a gold standard. The result was the appointment of a committee, under the presidency of Lord Hirschell, for the consideration of the whole subject. The inquiries of the committee gave complete confirmation to the conclusion that the financial position of the Government of India had become, in consequence of the fall in the gold value of silver, extremely critical, and that it was probable that a further serious fall was impending. It was far from unlikely that the value of the rupee might before long not be more than one shilling. There was already a large deficit, and the

voice It had been agreed by the Government of Lord Lawton, and by the Secretary of State, that it was expedient, in the first instance, to deal with weights and measures of capacity only, and not with measures of length, the latter being a matter of less urgency. The Government of Lord Mayo thought it desirable to take the opportunity of also defining in the new law the standard of length, on which, under the metrical system, the unit of weight depends. The Secretary of State, however, preferred the original conclusion, and a new Bill, introduced by Sir James Stephen, became law as the "Indian Weights and Measures of Capacity Act, 1871." It declared that it was desirable to provide for the ultimate adoption of a uniform system throughout British India, that the unit of weight should be the seer, equal to the kilogram of the metric system, that other weights and measures of capacity might be authorised by the Government, subject to the condition that they must be integral multiples or subdivisions of the prescribed units, that proper standards should be provided, and among other provisions, that after a date to be fixed by the Government, these weights and measures should be used in the dealings and contracts of the Government, of municipalities, and railway companies.

It was from the first declared that no attempt would be made to force the new system, in regard to then private trade and dealings, upon any classes of the people. It was recognised that it was visionary to suppose, even if the Government had been inclined to do anything so foolish, that it was possible to force upon the people of India, within any definite period, the adoption of any new system of weights and measures.

“All,” it was said, “who have studied the subject have agreed that the proper way of beginning the introduction of any new system would be to adopt it in all Government and municipal departments and on the railways. When we consider the manner in which a network of railways and canals will carry on an enormous proportion of the trade of the country, and when we remember the magnitude of the operations of the Government in the public works, the commissariat, the post-office, the customs, and other departments, it is reasonable to anticipate that in a not very distant future, the country would have become so far accustomed to the new units that the measures for their general introduction could no longer be called compulsory. It may be confidently said that not many years would elapse before this would be true at least of the wholesale traders in all the richest parts of India, and that they would gradually, for their own convenience, adopt the new system almost without pressure on the part of the Government. When the wholesale traders had become accustomed to the change, its gradual introduction into the operations of retail trade would be attended with comparatively little difficulty.”

In accordance with this plan of proceeding, communications with the principal railway companies were opened by Lord Mayo. The East Indian and some other companies had gone so far as to alter their weighing-machines, to make them suitable to the new system, and Lord Mayo confidently expected to see the first steps towards this reform, in which he had taken a great and active interest, successfully carried out. His death put a stop to all further proceedings, and through causes on which I will not comment, matters remain in the same condition in which they were found by Lord Lawrence forty years ago. Yet, the Regulation of 1833 having been repealed as obsolete, the Act of 1871 still remains on the statute-book, and, although treated as a dead letter, it is still the only law on the subject actually in force in British India. “We must be satisfied, for the present, with the knowledge that it is something



even to have failed in the accomplishment of a wise undertaking, when the failure may help to prepare the way for success hereafter. It may confidently be asserted that the acceptance of a sound and uniform system of commercial weights and measures would be hardly less important and valuable to India than was the adoption of a uniform system of currency. The public inconvenience and injury caused by the neglect of this matter have gone on far too long, and must continue to increase as the country becomes richer and trade more active."<sup>1</sup>

### NOTES TO CHAPTER XIII

#### 1 THE "GOLD STANDARD RESERVE" (Page 220)

On the 31st March 1910, the 'gold standard reserve' amounted to £18,764,047. Of this sum £13,219,217 was invested in sterling securities in England, £3,010,528 was in cash in England, and £2,534,302 was held in rupees in India. In 1908-9 and 1909-10 there were no profits from coinage, as it was not found necessary to add more rupees to the currency. So long as this abstention from coinage operations is maintained, the 'gold standard reserve' can increase only through the interest earned by the invested funds.

The Indian Government does not arbitrarily coin additional rupees for the sake of profit. It coins only in response to an effective trade demand. When the Indian export trade happens to be exceptionally active, there is a great demand by merchants in London for rupees in India. These they provide by buying the Secretary of State's drafts on the Indian Government, or by remitting sovereigns to India. In either case they are in a position to draw rupees from the Indian treasuries, and in order to keep a sufficient supply of this coinage, the Government may be obliged to purchase silver with some of the gold it receives from the London merchant, and coin it into rupees. The profits from coinage are added to the 'gold standard reserve.' But before coinage is resorted to, the Government substitutes sovereigns or gold securities for rupees, as far as is prudent, in the reserve held against the note issues. In this way during a season of active trade the Government becomes

<sup>1</sup> *The Finances and Public Works of India*, by Sir John Strachey and Lieut.-General Richard Strachey, 1882

possessed of a large stock of gold in the currency reserve, and also holds the great bulk of the 'gold standard reserve' in gold and gold securities. It has thus a double line of defence when a bad season comes and exports fall off and the Secretary of State has difficulty in selling drafts on India to meet his home requirements. The gold and gold securities of the currency reserve can, in such an emergency, be replaced by rupees withdrawn from active circulation. The 'gold standard reserve' can also be utilised to meet home expenditure, and sterling bills on London can be sold against it by the Indian Government in order to maintain the exchange. In this way the crisis of 1907-8 was successfully met. The intention of the Government is to secure in the 'currency reserve' and in the 'gold standard reserve' combined 25 millions in gold and gold securities. It is thought that this stock of gold should be sufficient to maintain the exchange basis of the Indian currency system.

## 2 INDIAN WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (Page 225)

The present attitude of the Indian Government with regard to the enforcement of the metric system embodied in the Act of 1871 is somewhat as follows. It evidently inclines to the view that the basis of any uniform standard of weight that is likely to be acceptable to the people must be based on the tola of 180 grains troy, the weight of the rupee. This is the actual basis of most of the local weights existing in different parts of India. The *seer* of 80 tolas, and the *maund* of 40 such seers, have been prescribed definitely by the Government for use on all Indian railways and in all statistical returns. To this extent standardisation of weights has been effected. Beyond this the central Government does not seem prepared to go, though it has permitted Acts regulating the duties of municipal boards to be passed, which, among other provisions, empower the boards to prescribe standards of weights and measures for local use. The adoption in India of the metric system of weights and measures, as contemplated by the Act of 1871, is as far off as ever.

## CHAPTER XIV

### PUBLIC WORKS—FAMINE

Mr J S Mill on the duties of Governments—Famines in India—Necessity for roads, railways, and canals—Absence of roads under Native Governments—Their condition under the East India Company—Measures taken by Lord Dalhousie—Railway construction—Creation of Public Works Department—Progress up to 1887—Irrigation works in Northern India—Canals of Muhammadan sovereigns—The Ganges and other canals—Their value—Irrigation works in Central and Southern India and in Sind—Expenditure on railways and irrigation works—The manner of providing funds—Guaranteed companies—Policy of borrowing for investment in public works—Measures for the prevention and relief of famine.

THE duties of the Government in India go far beyond those which we expect from a Government in countries like our own

“In the particular circumstances of a given age or nation,” wrote Mr J S Mill, evidently with India especially in his mind, “there is scarcely anything really important to the general interest which it may not be desirable, or even necessary, that the Government should take upon itself, not because private individuals cannot effectually perform it, but because they will not. At some times and places there will be no roads, docks, harbours, canals, works of irrigation, hospitals, schools, colleges, printing presses, unless the Government establishes them, the public being either too poor to command the necessary resources, or too little advanced in intelligence to appreciate the end, or not sufficiently practised in conjoint action to be capable of the means. This is true, more or less, of all countries inured to despotism, and

particularly of those in which there is a very wide distance in civilisation between the people and the Government, as in those which have been conquered and are retained in subjection by a more energetic and more cultivated people' <sup>1</sup>

But for our Government, hardly any of these requirements of civilised life would now be supplied in India, and there are special reasons which make the duty which thus falls upon the Government extraordinarily urgent

In India, the very existence of the people depends on the regular occurrence of the periodical rains, and when they fail through a wide tract of country, and, still worse, when they fail in successive years, the consequences are disastrous. It is, as the Government of India have observed, an obvious fallacy to suppose that any alterations of administration or in the system on which the assessments of the land are made can save an agricultural population, such as that of India, from the effects of failure of the rains. "The relation of cause and effect between a good rainfall, abundant crops, and agricultural prosperity, is not more obvious than that between a bad monsoon, deficient produce, and a suffering people. When the vast majority of the inhabitants of a country are dependent upon an industry which is in itself dependent upon the rainfall, it is clear that a failure of the latter must unfavourably, and in extreme cases calamitously, affect the entire agricultural community. The suspension of the rains means a suspension of labour, the suspension of labour means a drying up of the means of subsistence, and the latter is necessarily followed by distress and destitution. There is no industry in the world, the sudden interruption or the temporary destruction of which is not attended by

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Political Economy*, vol. II p. 551

impoverishment and suffering, and there is no country in the world, where the meteorological and climatic conditions are at all similar to those prevailing in India, that could by any land revenue system that might possibly be devised escape the same results. Nevertheless, if prevention of the inevitable consequences of drought be an ideal incapable of attainment, mitigation is manifestly an object worthy of the closest attention of the Government"<sup>1</sup>

The greater part of India is liable to this danger, but the country is so vast that it never happens that all parts of it suffer at the same time. Changes in the economical condition of the people, and especially greater diversity of occupation, can alone bring safeguards complete enough to render general famine, in its extremest form, through a great tract of country, impossible. But this must be a long and gradual process. Meanwhile, it has been found by experience that although the entire prevention of famines, the most destructive of all calamities, is beyond the power of any government, we can do much to mitigate them by removing obstacles which hinder commercial intercourse, and by means which increase and secure the productiveness of the land. The instruments by which we can do this are roads, railways, works of irrigation, and wells. If, to give one illustration, we read the history of the Indian famines of 1876-78, and of 1896-99, we shall find ample proof of the incalculable value of such works. Without them, millions of people must have been left to perish without the possibility of relief.

Lord Macaulay did not speak too strongly when he said that, excepting only the inventions of the alphabet

<sup>1</sup> Resolution of the Government of India, January 16, 1902. Papers regarding the Land revenue system of British India presented to Parliament 1902

and the printing press, no inventions have done so much for the moral and intellectual progress of man as those which abridge distance and improve the means of communication

Until about the middle of the last century the duties which thus fall upon us were hardly recognised. Before that time India was, to a great extent, governed on principles that might have commended themselves to a beneficent oriental ruler rather than to modern Englishmen. Even an enlightened man like Sir Charles Metcalfe could maintain in 1830 that India required no roads, and in fact there were none. No native prince made a road. Before the establishment of our Government there was hardly a road deserving the name in all India. Under the native Governments that preceded us (I am quoting from the Indian Famine Commissioners of 1880), nothing more was done than to plant trees along each side of the track used as a road, and occasionally to throw up earth on it when it passed through a depression, such bridges as existed were made at the private expense of civil magnates or governors desirous of leaving a name behind them.

The graphic description which Lord Macaulay has given of the highways of England in the time of Charles II is almost exactly applicable to those of India as I remember them in my youth. On the best lines of communication in England, he tells us, it was often hardly possible to distinguish the road at all, or to avoid losing one's way in the dark, the mud lay deep on the right and left, and only a narrow tract of firm ground rose above the quagmire, it happened almost every day that coaches stuck fast until a team of cattle could be procured to tug them out of the slough, when the floods were out, passengers perished in the attempt

to cross, or narrowly escaped being swept away, or had to wander across meadows, and ride to the saddle-skirts in water. The markets were often inaccessible during several months. "The fruits of the earth were sometimes suffered to rot in one place, while in another place, distant only a few miles, the supply fell far short of the demand" When Prince George of Denmark went to visit Petworth he was six hours in going nine miles, and it was necessary that a body of sturdy hinds should be on each side of his coach in order to prop it up, an unfortunate courtier who was one of the party complained that during fourteen hours he never once alighted, except when his coach was overturned or stuck fast in the mud All this, which I have borrowed from Lord Macaulay, is precisely what might have happened to Indian travellers on the most frequented highways of the country some sixty or seventy years ago, if they trusted themselves to wheeled vehicles But practically, for people who could afford it, the only means by which a long journey could be accomplished was to be carried by men in a palanquin A *dāk* journey, as it was called, of a thousand miles was, to an Englishman at least, a process of misery which in these days can hardly be understood I remember Lord Lawrence telling me that when he was a young man he was thought to have performed an extraordinary feat, because, travelling day and night, he reached Delhi in a fortnight after leaving Calcutta—a journey, at the present time, of less than thirty hours Throughout a great part of India it was only in the dry season that travelling was possible without extreme difficulty, and, during three or four months of the year, trade, excepting where water-carriage was available, came altogether to a standstill As Sir George Chesney says in his *Indian Polity* —

“The Court of Directors, until almost the termination of their existence, did not recognise the prosecution of public works as a necessary part of their policy. The construction of a road or canal was regarded by them, in their earlier days, much in the same light that a war would be—as an unavoidable evil, to be undertaken only when it could not be postponed any longer, and not, if possible, to be repeated.”

Speaking in 1858, Mr Bright said that in a single English county there were “more travelable roads than in the whole of India, and the single city of Manchester, in the supply of its inhabitants with the single article of water, has spent a larger sum of money than the East India Company spent in the fourteen years from 1834 to 1848 in public works of every kind throughout the whole of its vast dominions.” I do not doubt that Mr Bright’s statement was substantially not far from correct.

In the last years of the East India Company, however, and especially during the Government of Lord Dalhousie, matters began rapidly to improve. Under the enlightened rule of their Lieutenant-Governor, Mr Thomason, one of the wisest of Indian statesmen, great progress was made in the present Agra province in the construction of metalled roads, and bridges, and other useful works, and his example was vigorously followed by his successor, Mr John Colvin, and in the Punjab by the Lawrences. The grand trunk road from Calcutta to the north was rapidly pushed on. In 1854 the Ganges canal, an irrigation work with which no similar works in the world, except those of the Punjab and Madras, can compete in magnitude and utility, was opened, though not completed.

People had become alive to the fact that without the material appliances which facilitate and cheapen



of the Mughal empire, and to the industry of its numerous population, it has been for centuries one of the most important countries of India

Long before our time some of the Muhammadan sovereigns had undertaken works on the western bank of the Jumna, with the object partly of irrigation, but still more with that of affording a supply of water to the city and imperial palaces of Delhi. A canal, the course of which is not very clearly known, was made by Firoz Toghlak, as far back as 1351 A D, and more important works from the Jumna were constructed by Akbar and by Sháh Jehán in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. An elaborate system appears to have been in force for regulating the distribution of the water. The orders of Akbar provided "that all parties, rich or poor, weak or strong, shall share alike", and directed, for the comfort of travellers, "that on both sides of the canal trees of every description, both for shade and blossom, shall be planted, so as to make it like the canal under the tree in paradise, and that the sweet flavour of the rare fruits may reach the mouth of every one, and from these luxuries a voice may go forth to travellers, calling them to rest in the cities, where their every want will be supplied"<sup>1</sup> Not long after the death of Aurangzib, when the empire was rapidly broken up, the canals of the Mughal sovereigns ceased to flow, and it was not until 1817, after these provinces had passed under the British Government, that their restoration and improvement was commenced. Later on an examination of historical records led to a result which deserves to be noticed. Describing the excavations for the canal of Firoz Toghlak, the historian Ferishta mentions incidentally that the work-people

<sup>1</sup> *Calcutta Review*, "Canals of Irrigation," 1849

employed upon them found, near the foot of the hills, quantities of giants' bones "To minds familiar with discoveries in fossil geology the old chronicle had a gleam of significance," and the investigations which followed led to the discovery, by Falconer and Cautley, of the gigantic fossil remains now in the British Museum<sup>1</sup>

Little of the old irrigation works of our predecessors is retained in the existing canals. Practically, all of these have been made by ourselves, and the often-repeated statement, prompted, I suppose, by that strange inclination to depreciate their own achievements which often besets Englishmen, that the old canals have been more profitable than those constructed by ourselves, has not the least foundation of truth.

Among the irrigation works of primary importance in northern India are those which distribute the water of the Ganges and Jumna. In the winter and spring, before the Ganges has been swollen by the melting of the snow in the Himálaya, and when water is urgently required for agricultural operations, nearly the whole visible stream of the great river at Hardwár, where it leaves the mountains, is thrown into an artificial channel. The works, due to the genius of Sir Proby Cautley, on the first twenty miles of its course are in a high degree remarkable, for the canal intersects the drainage of the lower Himálaya, and has to be carried across rivers which often become furious torrents, bringing down enormous floods. These obstacles have been overcome by various methods with a skill of which our Indian engineers may well be proud. One torrent flows harmlessly in a broad artificial bed over the canal which runs below, over another, still more formidable,

<sup>1</sup> *Calcutta Review*, "Canals of Irrigation," 1849

state a good direct return on the cost of their construction, but the direct receipts are no index whatever to the benefits which are conferred by them upon the country. They give to great tracts complete protection against scarcity and famine, the wealth of the people is immensely increased, and it not seldom happens that the whole first cost of the works, although this is measured in many millions, is less than the value of the crops saved to the people in a single season.

Different systems of irrigation prevail in other parts of India. In central and southern India large tracts of country are dependent for their supply of water on lakes or reservoirs, known by the not very appropriate name of tanks. These are in some cases natural lakes, but oftener they have been formed by the construction of dams of masonry or earth across the outlets of valleys in the hills, and they are fed sometimes by rivers and sometimes by the rainfall of a more or less extensive area. They vary in size from ponds irrigating a few acres to lakes of several miles in circumference. In the Madras presidency there are some 60,000 of these tanks. Some of them are works constructed in times of which we have no historical record.

These are not the only means of irrigation in southern India. Works not inferior in importance to those of the United Provinces and Punjab, but on a different system, have been carried out by the British Government in the Madras presidency for utilising the waters of the Godáveri and Kistna rivers. They constitute a noble monument to Sir Arthur Cotton, to whose genius they are mainly due. At the head of each of the deltas formed by the rivers before they reach the sea, a great weir, or, as it is locally called, an *anicut*, is thrown across the river, which is diverted into irrigation

canals and distributing channels, some of which are also used for navigation. A large area, with a population of nearly 2,000,000, thus obtains complete protection against failure of rain, and these works have not only been in the highest degree beneficial to the people, but very profitable to the state. Without canal irrigation there would sometimes be no crops at all, and the value of the produce in a single year of scarcity has been four times as great as the whole of the capital expended on the canal works by the Government. Farther south, in Tanjore, works of a similar kind provide the means of utilising through a large tract of country, in the delta of the Káveri, almost the whole water-supply of that river. Another most remarkable work has been recently completed which pierces by a long tunnel the range of the western Gháts, and brings the waters of the Perigar river, which fed by a copious rainfall ran uselessly to the sea, into the comparatively dry country on the eastern side of the mountains.

In northern India the ordinary rental of land is doubled by irrigation, and it is often more than quadrupled in Madras.

In the province of Sind another system prevails. Little rain falls there, and without irrigation there would be no cultivation. In the same way that agriculture in Egypt depends on the inundation of the Nile, it depends in Sind on the floods brought down by the Indus in the season of the periodical rains. The floods fill the inundation canals, which are simple channels leading off from the river, with their beds at low-water level. For the rest of the year these canals are dry, and in years of low floods they work imperfectly. There is great room for further improvement, though the existing irrigation renders the province

state a good direct return on the cost of  $\frac{1}{4}$  the means of irrigation, but the direct receipts are no index. It is proposed to confer benefits which are conferred by them on canals by building one or more barrages across the Indus, and so obtaining a permanent supply of water. The scheme is one of great magnitude and may cost as much as ten millions sterling.

Altogether there are, in India, under the management or supervision of the British Government, some 46,000 miles of canals and other works, giving the means of irrigation to 23,000,000 acres of land. No similar works in other countries approach in magnitude the irrigation works of India, and no public works of nobler utility have ever been undertaken in the world. No year passes without some important extension of irrigation, but there are, unfortunately, many vast tracts of country in India where nothing in this direction seems possible, because there are no rivers that can be utilised, other means of storing and utilising water can, however, sometimes be adopted.<sup>1</sup> No admiration

<sup>1</sup> [In 1901 a Commission, over which Sir Colin Scott Moncreff presided, made an exhaustive inquiry into the subject of irrigation in India, both as to what had already been accomplished, and as what further extensions were possible in the future. The report of this Commission was published in 1903, and is a document of the greatest value and interest. The Commission found that the major irrigation works already in existence had been on the whole so profitable to the state that the surplus revenue, after meeting all interest charges, amounted to £700,000 a year. They found that the field for the construction of new remunerative works of magnitude was limited, being restricted to the Punjab, Sind, and parts of Madras. Outside these areas there was considerable scope for works of smaller dimensions, which might not be directly profitable, but which would reduce the cost and mitigate the intensity of future droughts. The Commission sketched out a rough programme of possible new works in all parts of India, the aggregate cost of which amounted to about £80,000,000 and which would irrigate about 6½ million acres. They recommended that the programme should be taken as the basis of a twenty years' scheme. Their recommendations have been accepted in principle, and form the basis of the policy of irrigation extension which the Government of India is now pursuing. Over £1,000,000 a year is being spent on the large remunerative schemes which are in progress in the Punjab and Sind, and between £400,000 and £500,000 a year is available for protective works from the famine insurance grant.]

can be too great for the Indian engineers to whom we owe these works. They have given fresh examples of their skill and science in the magnificent undertakings which, with similar objects, have of late years been carried out in Egypt.

Up to the end of 1909, including not only the funds borrowed by the Government, but the capital raised by companies under the guarantee of the Secretary of State, or supplied from other sources, nearly £360,000,000 had been spent on railways and irrigation works in India.<sup>1</sup> Nearly the whole of this outlay has taken place since the transfer of the government to the Crown in 1858, and the greater part of it since 1870. In spite of all encouragement which the Government could legitimately give, there have not been many instances in which any large amount of private capital has hitherto been forthcoming without a guarantee of interest for railways in India. One of the most important causes of this disinclination on the part of English capitalists to invest money in these and other useful undertakings, has been the absence of a common standard of value between India and England. I have explained in a preceding chapter that we may reasonably hope that this obstacle has now been removed. Almost the whole cost of these works has been provided either directly by the Government, or by English companies aided by a guarantee.

I must briefly explain the system under which the funds for this great expenditure have been supplied.

When, after the mutinies of 1857, the obligation of providing numerous works of improvement had been recognised, it became evident that the ordinary revenue

<sup>1</sup> [This includes some £36,000,000 capital outlay on railways constructed without guarantee of interest and on railways in native states, and £35,000,000 capital outlay on irrigation works.]

could not furnish the means of meeting the necessary outlay. The financial difficulties involved by the suppression of the mutinies were great, and for some years afterwards the necessity of providing barracks and hospitals for the largely increased force of British troops was so urgent that the progress of other works was crippled.

In 1864 the principle was accepted, that for the construction of works of irrigation it was right to supply by loan the funds which could not be otherwise provided, but it was not until 1867, during the Government of Lord Lawrence, that this conclusion took a practical shape under a scheme drawn up by General Sir Richard Strachey. It was clear that only a comparatively small part of the necessary outlay could be met from the revenues, the rest was to be supplied by loans. No project was to be taken up which did not promise to be fairly remunerative within a reasonable time, it was believed that the earnings would before long more than cover the interest on the borrowed capital, and that no ultimate charge would fall on the general revenues. In 1869 Sir Richard Strachey proposed to extend this system to the development of railways. His proposals were adopted without reservation by Lord Lawrence, whose conclusions were recorded in a minute which it is now no breach of official reserve to say was drafted by Sir Richard Strachey. The scheme was substantially approved by the Secretary of State, and the first steps were taken by Lord Mayo in 1870 for carrying it into effect.

I will not describe the various phases through which this policy has passed. The main principle, that railways and irrigation works in India may wisely, and without financial danger, be constructed with borrowed

money, has been consistently carried out, partly by the Government directly, and partly through the agency of companies assisted by a guarantee of interest or by subsidies from the state. The complete financial success of this policy will be shown in the next chapter.

All this is closely connected with a subject which, for many years past, has constantly occupied the attention of the Government of India, that of the prevention and relief of famine.

Little is known in detail regarding the famines which devastated India before the establishment of British rule, but there is no doubt that they were numerous and terrible. The first great famine of which trustworthy records exist is that of 1769-70. It would be impossible for any description to exaggerate the frightful sufferings of that time, when it was believed that one-third of the population of Bengal perished. In the ninety years that followed, many serious failures of the periodical rains occurred, but, as the Famine Commissioners of 1901 tell us, there was no systematised and sustained action by the Government for their relief, "and amid the wars and distractions and financial difficulties that attended the building up of an empire, the claims of famine relief attracted small attention." The first serious attempt to deal with the subject was made in the present Agra province in 1861, but when the great famine of 1866, commonly known as the Orissa famine, occurred, "the principles and methods of relief administration were still unsettled and unformed. That famine may be regarded as the turning-point in the history of Indian famines, for in the course of the inquiry conducted into it by the Commission presided over by the late Sir George Campbell, the foundations were laid of the humane policy which the Government



of India have now adopted " After the great famine of 1876-78 a Commission, under the presidency of Sir Richard Strachey, with Sir Charles Elliott as secretary, was appointed by Lord Lytton to inquire into the whole subject of famines in India, and to advise the Government on the measures to be taken for their prevention and relief " "Their inquiries," in the words of the Famine Commissioners of 1901, "for the first time reduced to system the administration of famine relief, and their report has powerfully influenced for good agrarian and administrative reform in India The labours of the Commission of 1880 were of two kinds on the one hand they formulated general principles for the proper treatment of famines, and, on the other, they suggested particular measures of a preventive or protective character In regard to the general principles with which we are immediately concerned, the Commission of 1880 recognised to the full the obligation imposed on the state to offer to the necessitous the means of relief in times of famine But it was the cardinal principle of their policy that this relief should be so administered as not to check the growth of thrift and self-reliance among the people, or to impair the structure of society, which, resting as it does in India upon the moral obligation of material assistance, is admirably adapted for common effort against a common misfortune " "The great object," they said, "of saving life and giving protection from extreme suffering may not only be as well secured, but in fact will be far better secured, if proper care be taken to prevent the abuse and demoralisation which all experience shows to be the consequence of ill-directed and excessive distribution of charitable relief " In this spirit a provisional Famine Code was framed, and the modern policy of famine

relief administration was determined That policy was first brought to a crucial test in the famine of 1896-97, and the very elaborate inquiry into its results conducted by the Commission of 1898 completely vindicated the principles laid down in 1880, and demonstrated the success which a system of relief based upon them could achieve Wherever there was failure, it was due not so much to defects in the system of relief, as to defects in the administration of it"<sup>1</sup>

In 1899 another serious famine occurred, and a Commission under the presidency of Sir Antony MacDonnell was appointed by the Government of Lord Curzon to re-examine, in the light of the further experience that had been gained, the whole question of measures for the relief and prevention of famine Sir Antony MacDonnell had himself, in 1897, when Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, shown with admirable ability and conspicuous success the manner in which serious famine must be combated The report of this Commission, issued in 1901, has already proved of inestimable value to the Government of India in dealing with these great calamities

The result of the labours of these three Commissions has been the preparation of elaborate codes of instructions for every province, laying down the principles and the practice to be followed on every occasion of threatened or actual scarcity We cannot expect that there will be no recurrence of these disasters India will still be subject from time to time to widespread and lamentable suffering, but we may reasonably hope that we shall not again see in their most aggravated form the horrors and the terrible mortality which

<sup>1</sup> Since the famine of 1876-78 there have been three Famine Commissions, that of 1880, of 1898, and of 1901, presided over respectively by Sir Richard Strachey, Sir James Lyall, and Sir Antony (now Lord) MacDonnell

attended the famines of former times. Large tracts of country which were, not long ago, isolated by physical obstacles, and, by the want of means of communication, almost inaccessible to trade, and dependent on the food produced in their own borders, are now easy of access. Whereas millions formerly perished from the physical impossibility of providing them with food, Sir Antony MacDonnell's Commission of 1901 was able to state that in the famines of 1897 and 1899 there was never a dearth of food in any famine-stricken tract. "To the policy," the Commission wrote, "of protective railways such ample effect has now been given that the final horror of famine—an actual dearth of food—need no longer be a source of apprehension. In inaccessible mountain country or in some remote valley the local officers may have, upon occasion, to bring food for the people, or to subsidise private trade to do so, but in the continent at large there is, for the future, no anxiety as to the ability of private trade to deliver food where it is needed. There is, indeed, necessity for improving the means of transport by an increase of the rolling stock, but, generally, railway construction has, in our opinion, played its part in the policy of famine insurance. To put the food-supply of the country in circulation was necessarily the first object of a wise famine policy, to protect and develop the supply itself should be its second object, and this is the function of agricultural development generally, and of irrigation in particular. This subject was dealt with at considerable length by the Commission of 1898, and the evidence which we have taken, and our own experience, show that there is a wide field for the construction of irrigation works. All provinces do not, indeed, present practicable schemes for the construction of great canals,

but the possibilities of smaller protective works have in no province been exhausted, while in some provinces they have as yet hardly been examined. For storage tanks, reservoirs, and, above all, irrigation wells, the scope and the necessity are very great. As the whole subject of irrigation has now been taken up by the Government in pursuance of the recommendations of the Commission of 1898, we need do no more than point to the confirmation which our inquiries afford to the conclusions of the last Commission, and express our cordial approval of a new departure in famine policy which would place irrigation works in the place that protective railways have hitherto occupied in the famine insurance programme."

Since 1896 India has suffered to an extent, happily altogether unusual, from repeated failure of the periodical rains, but, while the distress thus caused is in the highest degree lamentable, there is much in the history of that time which gives hope and encouragement. Speaking with an authority and personal knowledge greater perhaps than that of any man in India, Sir Antony MacDonnell, after the famine of 1897 in the United Provinces, "drew the general conclusion that the cultivating classes, whether tenants or proprietors, have displayed a command of resources, either in the shape of capital or credit, and a power of resistance which has not been paralleled in any period of scarcity." The same conclusion was declared by the Commission of 1898 to be applicable to India generally. "The general conclusions," they wrote, "we are disposed to draw are that it may be said of India as a whole that of late years, owing to higher prices, there has been a considerable increase in the incomes of the land-holding and cultivating classes, and that their standard of

elapsed after the suppression of the mutinies and the cessation of the extraordinary expenditure immediately due to them, that is, from 1862 to 1909, the debt was apparently increased by £153,000,000. This increase resulted entirely from the policy of borrowing for investment in railways and irrigation works, and it is called an apparent increase, because that policy now involves no burden, but a profit to the state. Apart from such investments, the public debt in the period above mentioned not only received no increase, but was reduced by about £60,000,000. This will appear the more remarkable when it is remembered that India during this time suffered from a succession of serious famines, for the relief of which, and for protective works, an expenditure of more than £28,000,000 was incurred, that a net sum of £12,250,000 was spent on war, that heavy expenses had often to be met on account of military operations against the frontier tribes, and that a very large increase of charge has been caused by the fall in the gold value of silver.

The existing railways have either been constructed directly by the Government or through companies guaranteed or otherwise assisted by the state. In the latter case the Government has reserved, under the original contracts, the power of purchasing the lines after a certain period has elapsed. This power has been exercised in nearly every case in which it was possible to do so, the payments being made in the form of terminable annuities, carrying with them a sinking fund for the redemption of capital. The railways thus become state lines, and, in the course of the next half-century, the Government of India will come into full possession of a magnificent property, yielding every year a great revenue. The most important of the undertakings

purchased in this way was the East Indian Railway, the great line connecting Calcutta with Delhi and the northern provinces. The transaction has already proved very advantageous to the state. In the ten years ending with 1909 it brought to the public revenues, after meeting all charges, including payments on account of the terminable annuity by means of which the purchase of the line was made and interest on all capital outlay subsequent to the date of purchase, a clear profit of nearly £10,000,000. At the end of seventy-four years from 1880, when the annuity expires, the Government will come into the receipt of a clear yearly income which is not likely to be less than £2,700,000, equivalent, after making allowance for all outgoings, to the creation of a capital of upwards of sixty or seventy millions sterling. It is not now possible to say what will be the total capital expenditure on the railway by that time, but up to the end of 1909 it had not exceeded forty-eight millions, and whatever additional capital may be required, it is reasonable to assume that there will be simultaneously an increase of net revenue at least sufficient to cover the additional interest to be paid. In this and in some other cases the working of the line has not been managed directly by the Government, but through a company under a working lease.

The rate of interest guaranteed on the capital of the railways first constructed by companies was 5 per cent, and the Government bound itself to make good any sum by which the net traffic receipts, after paying all working expenses, fall short of the amount necessary to provide interest at that rate. The later contracts have been more favourable to the Government.

The true measure of the burden of public debt is the annual charge thrown upon the revenues by the pay-

crisis in the United States of America and in Europe seriously affected the gross earnings of the railways, while working costs had for various reasons increased. Instead of the substantial net receipts of preceding years there was a net charge of £1,240,000 under railways in the accounts of 1908-9. In 1909-10 the railways again gave a net profit, but on a smaller scale, and as wages and the price of coal have risen, and more money is being spent out of revenue on betterment and renewals, some time may elapse before large net profits are again recorded. But taking one year with another the railways have now not only ceased to be a burden on the general revenues of the country, but may be expected in future to be a profitable source of state revenue.

Up to the end of 1909 the total capital expenditure on major irrigation works had been £30,739,000. The estimated net receipts in 1909-10, after deduction of working expenses and interest on the capital outlay, were £1,278,000. Against this profit there was a loss of £688,000 on minor irrigation works. The net receipts under the head of Irrigation were thus £590,000.

In 1862 the public works debt was not separated, as it is now, from the ordinary debt. In that year the total net charge to the state on account of debt of every description, and including the sums paid as guaranteed interest to railway companies, was £6,585,000. In 1909-10 the total net charge to the state was £917,000, this being the interest on the ordinary debt and on other obligations, the payment of the interest on the public works debt, amounting to £7,209,000, involves no charge at all, as the railways and works of irrigation not only discharged it but also gave to the state a profit of £1,418,000. The ordinary debt

of India was much less than the revenue of a single year

I have hitherto spoken only of those public works which give a direct return in cash on the capital outlay, and which have been mainly constructed with borrowed money. Since the transfer of the government to the Crown there has also been an immense expenditure from revenue on works of a different class, but not less useful, such as roads and bridges, telegraphs, hospitals, barracks and military works, colleges, schools, and other public buildings, and minor works of irrigation and navigation.

Before leaving the subject of public works and debt there is another matter to which reference must be made.

It has already been pointed out that, in addition to the reasons which in other countries render the construction of railways necessary, they are required in India because without them it is not possible to give adequate relief on the occurrence of the famines to which India, an almost purely agricultural country, has always from time to time been exposed through the failure of the periodical rains. In many parts of the country the provision of irrigation works is still more important.

It was not until 1874, when Lord Northbrook was Viceroy, that it was recognised that, since famines could not be looked on as abnormal and exceptional calamities, it was essential that provision against the grave financial obligations which they involve should be made as one of the ordinary charges of the state. "Whatever means," Lord Northbrook said, "we may take to obviate or mitigate them, it must, under present circumstances, be looked upon as inevitable that famines will from time to time occur", he concluded that to meet them merely by borrowing would be financially ruinous, that it was necessary to reserve in prosperous



times a substantial surplus of revenue over expenditure, and that, if this surplus were devoted to the reduction of debt, or to the construction of productive public works, thereby preventing the increase of debt, there would be no objection, when famine occurred, to meeting from borrowed money charges to the full extent to which debt had been reduced or prevented.

In 1877-78 measures were proposed by myself and adopted by the Government of Lord Lytton for giving practical effect to these principles

Between 1873 and 1878 the actual expenditure on the relief of famine, including remissions of land revenue, was more than 160,000,000 rupees. This was a period of exceptional disaster, and it was concluded that it might safely be assumed that the average annual charge for relieving famine was not likely to exceed 15,000,000 rupees. It was determined, therefore, that in addition to that necessary margin of revenue over expenditure which a prudent administration always desires to maintain, a surplus of 15,000,000 rupees must every year be provided on account of famine relief alone, and that this sum, when the country was free from famine, must be regularly devoted to the discharge of debt, or to the prevention of debt which would otherwise have been incurred for the construction of railways and canals. The practical result of such a plan would be to store up, in times of prosperity, resources by means of which, when famine occurred, it would be possible to meet the inevitable requirements of the future and the heavy obligations of the state. If, for example, this policy were followed during a period of ten years in which there was no famine, debt at the end of that time would have been reduced or prevented to the extent of 150,000,000 rupees, and, if serious famine then occurred,

the same amount might be borrowed for its relief without placing the country in a worse position financially than that of ten years before

The original scheme was subsequently modified, and it was determined that a portion of the sum set aside every year as an insurance against famine might be directly expended on the construction of railways and canals required for the protection of districts specially liable to drought and consequent scarcity

This policy of insurance against famine was simple in its nature, but it has been constantly misunderstood and persistently misrepresented. It has often been supposed that a separate fund was constituted into which certain revenues were to be paid, and which could only be drawn upon for a specified purpose. No such unreasonable and impracticable notion was ever entertained, and every idea of the kind was from the first repudiated by the Government and by myself, the author of the original scheme. The 'famine insurance fund,' of which people have often talked, never existed. The intention was nothing more than the annual application of surplus revenue to the extent of 15,000,000 rupees to the purposes that I have described. The sum now allotted annually is £1,000,000. Although, in some years, financial pressure has made it impossible to make the full annual grant under the famine insurance scheme, the system has been substantially maintained. The sum expended from revenue under the head of famine relief and insurance, either on the actual relief of distress, or on protective irrigation works and railways, or on the reduction of debt, from the time when the scheme came into operation up to the end of 1908-9, exceeded £28,000,000, of this more than one-half was spent on the actual relief of famine.

## CHAPTER XVI

### EDUCATION IN INDIA

First establishment of colleges in Bengal—Controversy between advocates of Oriental and English study—Lord Macaulay in 1835—His contempt for Oriental literature—Mountstuart Elphinstone on Indian education—System established under Macaulay's influence—Neglect of primary education—System laid down by Lord Halifax in 1854—Its main features—Proportion of population able to read and write—Female education—Lady Dufferin's Association—Mr Baines on illiteracy of the people—The Indian Universities—Colleges—Number of Natives knowing English—Collegiate Instruction—Education of Muhammadans—Sir Syad Ahmad Khán—His College—Medical Colleges—Technical and Art Schools—Secondary Education—Small number of educated Natives—Neglect of study of Science—Sir Henry Maine on study of English classical literature—The teaching of false history—Inaccuracy and bad faith of James Mill—Books and newspapers—Their general character—Liberty of the Press in India.

It was only during the later times of the East India Company's Government that the promotion of education in India was considered one of the duties of the state. The encouragement, however, of oriental learning had long, to some extent, been acknowledged to be a matter of importance, both for its own sake, and because a knowledge of Muhammadan and Hindu law was necessary in the civil and criminal courts. To Warren Hastings belongs the honour of having founded, in 1782, the first college in Bengal, and it was maintained for some years at his expense. It was

especially intended to encourage the study of Arabic and Persian literature and Muhammadan theology, "to qualify the Muhammadans of Bengal for the public service, chiefly in the courts of justice, and to enable them to compete on more equal terms with the Hindus for employment under Government." In 1791, a college, with similar objects, but "designed to cultivate the laws, literature, and religion of the Hindus, and specially to supply qualified Hindu assistants to European judges," was established at Benares. A few more institutions of a similar kind were founded, and as time went on the demand for other forms of education increased. A long controversy took place between the advocates of oriental and English study: the former desired to give more liberal help to students of Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian, to encourage the production of literary and scientific works in oriental languages, and to provide for the translation of valuable books from the languages of Europe into those of India; the latter maintained that all the higher branches of knowledge should be taught through the medium of English alone. The controversy virtually ended in 1835 with a minute by Lord Macaulay, who was then a member of the Governor-General's Council in Calcutta. Nothing could exceed the contempt which in his picturesque sentences he poured forth on the languages and literature of the East. That India, and Arabia, and Persia possessed great literatures of their own, that they have produced poets and philosophers whose works hold no mean place among the enduring monuments of human genius, these were facts which Lord Macaulay totally ignored.

"The question before us," he wrote, "is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language—English—we shall teach languages in which, by universal confession, there are no books on

any subject which deserve to be compared to our own, whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, wherever they differ from those of Europe, differ for the worse, and whether, when we patronise sound philosophy and true history, we shall countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in the girls at an English boarding-school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter”

It is interesting to compare the scornful utterances of Macaulay with, as I believe, the wiser views which a great and accomplished Indian statesman, Mountstuart Elphinstone, expressed in a minute on education in India not many years before

“Sanskrit poetry,” he wrote, “has called forth the enthusiastic admiration of no mean judges among ourselves. Even without the example and assistance of a more civilised nation, the science possessed by every people is gradually superseded by their own discoveries as they advance in knowledge, and their early works fall into disuse and oblivion. But it is otherwise with their poetry, the standard works maintain their reputation undiminished in every age, they form the models of composition and the fountains of classical language, and the writers of the rudest ages are those who contribute the most to the delight and refinement of the most improved of their posterity”

In the same minute he deplored the fact that we had dried up the sources of native talent, that the existing learning of the country was being lost, and the productions of former genius forgotten

“A class of men,” he said, “was formerly maintained whose time was devoted to the cultivation of their understanding, their learning may have been obscure and degenerate, but still it bore some affinity to real science, into which it might in time have been improved. They were not, perhaps, much inferior to those monks among whom the seeds of European learning were long kept alive, and their extinction, if it did not occasion the loss of much present

wisdom, would have cut off all hope for the future. When once the college had become an established place of resort for Brahmans, it would be easy to introduce by degrees improvements into the system of education, and thus render the institution a powerful instrument for the diffusion of civilisation. Some such alterations must be the fruit of time, and cannot be adopted until we have instruments better fitted to impart instruction, as well as auditors better prepared to receive it. At no time, however, could I wish that the purely Hindu part of the course should be totally abandoned. It would surely be a preposterous way of adding to the intellectual treasures of a nation to begin by the destruction of its indigenous literature, and I cannot but think that the future attainments of the natives will be increased in extent as well as in variety by being, as it were, engrafted on their own previous knowledge, and imbued with their own original and peculiar character"<sup>1</sup>

No one was more desirous than Elphinstone to encourage the study of the English language. For a native of India there is no other key by which he can unlock the richer stores of western science and knowledge, and without it he cannot hope to take any prominent part in the higher branches of the public administration. Whether it was right to assign to English and the classical literature of England the almost exclusive position which they have been made to hold in our system of education in India, and almost to ignore the existence of the vernacular languages of the country and the literature of the east, is another matter. For my part I do not doubt that the views of Warren Hastings, and Sir William Jones, and Wellesley, and Elphinstone were far wiser than those of Macaulay, and that for Hindus and Muhammadans the study of their own languages and the literature of their own people and kinsmen was not less essential than the study of English

<sup>1</sup> Forrest's "Selections from the Minutes of the Hon Mountstuart Elphinstone"—Minute on Education, March 1824

The influence of Macaulay was irresistible. The Government of Lord William Bentinck decided that "the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone." Although some of the old institutions were allowed to go on teaching in a feeble way the classical languages of the east, the conclusion virtually arrived at was that oriental studies required no encouragement from the state. During the next ten or fifteen years progress was made in the establishment of English colleges and schools. Very little was thought at that time about primary education for the masses of the people. Education, it was said, would "filter downwards."

So far as higher education is concerned, the principles laid down in 1835 have been in the main adhered to ever since. The learning and literature of the east are practically as completely ignored in our Government colleges and universities at the present time as they were in the time of Lord Macaulay. All higher education, whether scientific or literary, is given in English, and a young man may go through nearly the whole of his university course without having occasion to make use of the language of his own country.<sup>1</sup> The bare

<sup>1</sup> [In the revised Regulations which the Calcutta University has framed under the Universities Act of 1904 better provision has been made for the vernacular languages. Thus composition in the vernacular is now a compulsory subject in the Intermediate examination of the Calcutta University, and in the examination for the B. A. degree of the same university a vernacular language is one of the four compulsory subjects. The Madras University also has made the vernacular language of the candidate a compulsory subject in the Intermediate examination, and has included vernacular history and literature among the optional subjects in the B. A. course. In the regulations of the other universities the vernaculars find no place either as optional or compulsory subjects of study. In discussing the general tendencies of the revised regulations of the universities promulgated

statement of the fact that little can be learned in our colleges except through the medium of a foreign tongue, goes far to explain their comparative failure. But the subject of the results obtained by our system of education is one to which I shall return.

There were some exceptions to the general neglect of primary education which followed the measures taken in 1835. In what is now the Agra province, in particular, a wise and enlightened Lieutenant-Governor, James Thomason, laid the foundations of a system of village schools, but it was not until 1854 that the duty of the state in regard to this matter was distinctly recognised. In that year orders, for which Lord Halifax (then Sir Charles Wood) was mainly responsible, were sent by the Court of Directors in India. The despatch containing them has been called "the charter of education in India." I shall quote, from the report of the Indian Education Commission of 1883, a summary of its contents, it will show the system on which the Government has been working ever since —

"The immediate aims of the Government were the same as those to which the attention of every European state was first directed when organising its system of public instruction. The existing schools of all kinds were to be improved and their number increased, systematic inspection was to be established, and a supply of competent teachers was to be provided. But in India the attitude of the state to national education was affected by three conditions to which no European state could furnish a parallel. In the first place, the population was not only as large

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under the Universities Act of 1904 the author of the *Fifth Quinquennial Review of Education in India* (1902-7) observes that "The universities all agree in preserving the English language as the chief instrument of study and English literature as one of the most important subjects. The idea that university studies can be carried on in this country without recourse to the English language has met nowhere with support in university circles, and the Oriental faculty of the Punjab University, which alone has tried the experiment, is a dwindling and almost defunct body."



ns that of all the European states together that had adopted an educational system, but it presented, in its different provinces, at least as many differences of creed, language, race, and custom. Secondly, the ruling power was bound to hold itself aloof from all questions of religion. Thirdly, the scheme of instruction to be introduced was one which should culminate in the organisation of a literature and science essentially foreign. While, therefore, on the one hand, the magnitude of a task before the Indian Government was such as to make it almost impossible of achievement by any direct appropriation from the resources of the empire, on the other, the popular demand for education—so important a factor in the success of the European systems—had to be created. The Government adopted the only course which circumstances permitted. It was admitted that ‘to imbue a vast and ignorant population with a general desire for knowledge, and to take advantage of the desire when excited to improve the means for diffusing education among them, must be the work of many years, as a Government, we can do no more than direct the efforts of the people, and aid them wherever they appear to require most assistance.’”

Under the orders of 1854, supplemented by later instructions, a separate department of Public Instruction was constituted. Universities were to be founded in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, institutions for training teachers for all classes of schools were to be established, the number of Government colleges and high schools was to be increased, new middle schools were to be created, efforts were above all to be devoted to the development of elementary education with the object of “conveying to the great mass of the people, who are utterly incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts, useful and practical knowledge, suited to every station in life.” The English language was to be the medium of instruction in the higher branches of education, and the vernacular languages of the country in the lower, and



that education ought to be extended to the masses of the people. But for many years past the Government has adhered to the principle affirmed in 1854, that the main duty of the state lies in providing means of primary instruction to the classes which can make no provision for themselves. I need hardly enlarge on the magnitude of such an undertaking in India<sup>1</sup>. Anything like compulsory education is out of the question. Even if unlimited funds were available, it would be impossible to succeed, except by slow degrees, and by steady perseverance through a long course of years, in educating any large proportion of two hundred and thirty millions of people, nearly the whole of whom are now totally illiterate, and filled to a degree which can hardly be exaggerated with the prejudices of ignorance, and caste, and superstition. It was an almost inevitable consequence of the difficulty of such an undertaking that the Government, notwithstanding the principles

<sup>1</sup> [Free compulsory education has now its advocates among the leaders of the more advanced party of Indian reformers, and the Government of India recently took the opinions of the local Governments as to the abolition of school fees in primary schools as the first step in the direction of making primary instruction universal, and possibly compulsory in certain areas. The opinions received are adverse to the expediency of the step in the present stage of primary education in India. The school fees levied are very low, and are remitted in the case of the poorer scholars. There is no evidence that they act as a deterrent, while in the aggregate they are a source of revenue which usefully supplements the none too ample funds that district boards and the Government are able to provide for primary education. They are also essential to the system of aided private schools which prevails in some provinces, as without them the private teacher could not exist. For the present the two most crying wants of primary education in India are more schools and better paid and more efficient teachers. These wants are being met as funds permit, but they are much in excess of the money available at present or likely to be available in the near future and even if the money difficulty were disposed of, the inadequate supply of competent teachers would stand for a long time in the way of universal primary education. There are, roughly speaking, sixteen to eighteen million boys in British India of an age to attend primary schools. In 1909 the number of boys attending recognised primary schools was 4,095,000, representing less than one fourth of the total. In the last ten years there has been an increase in the school going population of 1,000,000. The state is not standing still in the matter, but the figures indicate the magnitude of the problem, and the work that has still to be done.]

that it had laid down for its guidance, should continue to spend the greater part of its available funds on higher education, the results of which were more immediately apparent, and comparatively little on the extension of elementary instruction

In some parts of India there have been, from time immemorial, considerable numbers of village and local schools, in which instruction of a very elementary kind is given. In the Hindu schools the instruction is chiefly or wholly secular, the Muhammadan schools have a religious character. In Bengal and in Madras the existing system of primary instruction originally started from the indigenous schools, and consists chiefly of private venture schools, in which the teacher lives on the fees and presents he can collect, supplemented in most cases by a grant-in-aid from the district board. In the United Provinces a similar plan of encouraging private elementary schools has of late been adopted, as the cheapest way of multiplying facilities for education. In Bombay and the Punjab, on the other hand, the primary schools are mostly under public management, the schoolmaster and all other charges being paid by the district board, and the school fees being credited to that body. In Burma, where a far larger proportion of the population can read and write than in any part of India, primary education, according to the ancient custom of the country, is almost entirely in the hands of the Buddhist monks.

The course of instruction in the primary schools varies in the different provinces. In addition to reading, writing, arithmetic, it usually includes in the higher classes some history and geography, a little mensuration, drawing, and elementary science, and possibly the rudiments of agriculture.

that, in the absence of all female teachers, they have taken upon themselves the duty of instructing their wives and daughters. But among the small number of those who are conscious of the prevailing evil, and would be glad to see it remedied, the majority cannot overcome the repugnance of their families to female education, or the opinion of the society that surrounds them, and they prefer to follow the customs of their people and the example of their forefathers. As a general rule, even those who have received the highest training that our English schools and colleges can give, are opposed to the education of women, and hold the traditional Indian view that to be able to read and write is an accomplishment which a modest woman had better be without. While such opinions as these continue to be generally held, it is impossible that the Government can take any very successful steps for the promotion of female education.

In spite of these difficulties, there has been progress. Remarkable instances have occurred in which native ladies have attained literary and academic distinction, several have passed the university entrance examinations, and a few have obtained degrees. But these are very rare exceptions. The instruction which is ordinarily given in schools for Indian girls is purely elementary. It is confined to the teaching of little girls to read and write in the vernacular, to do easy sums and a little needlework. The number of girls receiving such instruction has increased considerably of late years, but even in the most advanced provinces it represents an extremely small percentage of the female population of school-going age. It is less than 6 per cent in Madras and Bombay, and barely exceeds 1 per cent in the United Provinces.

Such progress as there has been, is in a great measure due to the missionary societies. In most provinces the girls in their schools are more numerous than in those of the Government, and *zanána* missions connected with the societies give more or less secular instruction in a considerable number of native families. The example given by English ladies who have devoted themselves to teaching in the *zanáns* has, to some extent, been followed by natives themselves, who are often unwilling to admit avowed Christian influences into their families. The report of the Indian Education Commission stated that—

“In Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and in many large cities of India, it is now possible for a wealthy native to obtain instruction for the ladies of his family within his own house. A distinct class of *zanána* agencies on a secular basis is springing up, conducted by committees of native gentlemen, or by mixed committees of Natives and Europeans, with the object, in some cases, of imparting education in *zanáns* without any element of religious teaching, in others, of testing by periodical examinations, and encouraging by records, the home education of governesses. These agencies are already doing useful work, although on a comparatively small scale, and the commission trusts that they will receive a still larger measure of sympathy and co-operation from English ladies in India.”<sup>1</sup>

Since the Commission reported, the progress of *zanána* teaching has been less rapid than might have been expected. There is a growing demand among Indians of the better classes for women teachers for their households, but the movement is checked by the dearth of qualified teachers. In many parts of India acceptable teachers (who must be orthodox Hindu or Muhammadan women) are not obtainable at all.

In connection with the subject of female education mention must be made of the truly admirable scheme initiated by the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, and

<sup>1</sup> *Report*, p. 535

actively encouraged ever since by the wives of successive Viceroys, for supplying female medical aid to the women of India. Reference has been made to the success of the medical colleges established by the Government, and to the great aptitude shown by natives of India in the practice of surgery and medicine. The country is covered with hospitals and dispensaries; but the women of India are shut off from the benefits brought by European science to their doors, because their customs make it impossible to allow the professional attendance of men. A lamentable amount of unnecessary suffering is the consequence. The association that has been founded, and which has made remarkable progress, has for its object the provision, on a large scale, of the means of teaching and training women in India to act as doctors, hospital assistants, nurses, and midwives, the establishment, under female superintendence, of dispensaries and hospitals for the treatment of women and children, the opening of female wards, under female superintendence, in existing hospitals and dispensaries, the provision of female medical officers and attendants for existing female wards, and the supply of trained nurses and midwives for women in hospitals and private houses. It has been laid down as a fundamental rule of the association that it shall be absolutely unsectarian in its aims and conduct, and that no one of its servants shall ever be allowed to proselytise or interfere in any way with the religious beliefs of the people. This excellent movement has received active encouragement both from our own Government and from the rulers of native states. Connected with this association there were, in 1908, 300 hospitals and dispensaries, and more than 2,000,000 women and children received relief. There

were 48 highly educated lady doctors, 90 assistant surgeons, and a large number of hospital assistants, while 507 women were studying in the various medical schools in India.

The figures that have been given show how small an impression has hitherto been made on the enormous mass of Indian ignorance. There are two facts to be remembered. The first is the fact that the great mass of the population is agricultural, and in far more civilised countries this is not the class among which education flourishes. "The second influence antagonistic to a more general spread of literacy is the long-continued existence of a hereditary class, whose object it has been to maintain their own monopoly of all book-learning as the chief buttress of their social supremacy. Sacerdotalism knows that it can reign over none but an ignorant populace. The opposition of the Bráhmaṇ to the rise of the writer castes has been already mentioned, and the repugnance of both, in the present day, to the diffusion of learning amongst the masses can only be appreciated after long experience. It is true that the recognition by the British Government of the virtue and necessity of primary education has met with some response on the part of the literary castes, but it is chiefly in the direction of academic utterances, which cannot, in the circumstances, be well avoided. It is welcomed, too, in its capacity of affording the means of livelihood to many of these castes, as they have to be engaged as teachers, and are bound accordingly to work up to the state standard of efficient tuition. The real interest of the castes in question is centred on secondary education, of which they almost exclusively are in a position to reap the advantage."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *General Report on the Castes of India*, 1891, p. 211



Discouraging as the actual condition of primary education may seem, things are far better than they were, and the progress that has been made must not be undervalued. The earnestness and ability with which Lord Curzon during his viceroyalty dealt with the subject, and the financial help which the Government of India in pursuance of his policy has given to local Governments for the improvement and extension of primary education, are now beginning to bear fruit. In the whole of British India, excepting the present Agra province, when the government was transferred to the Crown there were only some 2000 elementary schools, with less than 200,000 scholars, while in 1909 there were 118,000 recognised primary schools for boys and girls with 4,421,000 scholars, besides some 550,000 scholars in unrecognised primary schools. Nor should it be forgotten how short a time has elapsed since our own country, under far less difficult circumstances, began practically to recognise the necessity of elementary education. Four years before the accession of Queen Victoria no public money was granted in England for elementary schools.

Reference must now be made to the means provided for higher education and to the results that have been obtained.

The three universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay were established in 1857, a fourth was established at Allahabad in 1887 for the present United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. Their constitution is similar to that of the London university: they have a chancellor, vice-chancellor, and senate, with a governing body; they are examining bodies only, but by their examinations they control the course of study throughout the greater part of India, in the colleges affiliated

to them<sup>1</sup> In 1882 a university was established at Lahore for the Punjab, and this, though in the main an examining body, like the older universities, devotes a portion of the income which it derives from examination fees to the maintenance of a college for oriental learning

The entrance examinations for matriculation are open to candidates who are sent up from recognised schools or who have been under *bond fide* private tuition The subjects vary in the several universities English and mathematics are everywhere compulsory To these are added two or three other subjects, such as a classical or vernacular language, history and geography, physics and chemistry, advanced mathematics A minimum age of fifteen or sixteen years is prescribed for candidates, but usual age of the candidates is between sixteen and eighteen According to the estimate of the Education Commission, the standard of knowledge required is about that which at the age of sixteen an English boy of average intelligence will be found to possess Success in the entrance examination of an Indian university admits a student to any of the colleges affiliated to it

The college course depends on the degree which the student seeks to obtain, and on the regulations of the university to which the college is affiliated. If the student takes the most frequented road he will graduate in Arts after a four years' course, and in order to do this he must pass an examination after two years called the Intermediate Examination in Arts A fair sample of the subjects which may be taken for this examination

<sup>1</sup> [The affiliated colleges numbered 176 in 1907 Of these 161 were Arts colleges with a total attendance of about 18,000 scholars The great majority of these colleges are under private management, receiving for the most part grants in aid from public revenues There are over 40 colleges maintained by missionaries Others are supported by particular communities or races.]

is English, a classical language, history, and logic. After passing this examination he reads for another two years and then passes an examination for Bachelor of Arts. In this examination English language and literature always is one of the subjects. The others may be two or three in number and offer considerable choice in literature, history, philosophy, and where there is not a separate science degree, in science. Some or all of the universities give, besides the Arts degree, degrees in science, law, medicine, and engineering. The Arts degree attracts the greatest number of students, and it is taken by 85 per cent of the graduates.

On the average about 24,000 candidates annually present themselves at the entrance examination, and 11,000 pass. Only 2800 on the average succeed in passing the Intermediate examination, and less than 2000 annually become graduates. The wastage is thus remarkably large. A very large number of students fall out by the way. "The phenomenon, peculiar to India, of candidates for employment urging as a qualification that they have failed at a university examination (meaning that they have passed the preceding examination and added thereto some years of study for the next) is due to two causes, the large number of students whom the universities reject at their examinations before they grant the B A degree to the remainder, and the dearth of graduates. If there were enough graduates forthcoming to fill the places, those who can only urge as their qualification that they have failed in the Bachelor's degree would no longer be serious competitors."<sup>1</sup>

The number of natives possessing a knowledge of

<sup>1</sup> *Progress of Education in India, Fifth Quinquennial Review, 1902-1907*, p. 35

English was, in the whole of India, in 1901, according to the census of that year, only some 850,000. The number seems extraordinarily small in view of the fact that over 400,000 boys were attending secondary schools in which English was the medium of instruction. There is some reason to think that the census enumerators pitched the standard of "literacy" in English too high, and that schoolboys who were learning English were in many cases excluded. But the return may also point to the fact that many adults had forgotten the English which for examination purposes they once learnt at school.

In regard to the general scope and character of collegiate instruction in India, the account given in the report of the Indian Education Commissioners may be quoted —

"The system is now almost uniform throughout India. Purely oriental colleges must be excepted. These, however, are so few in number that they scarcely enter into a consideration of collegiate education in its modern development. The college of to-day aims at giving an education that shall fit its recipient to take an honourable share in the administration of the country, or to enter with good hope of success the various liberal professions now expanding in vigorous growth. The English and oriental classes occupy an important place in the collegiate scheme. In history, philosophy, mathematics, and physical science, English is the medium of instruction, and the passport to academic honours.

The affiliated colleges are of two grades: those whose students go no farther than the First Arts Examination, and those in which they proceed to the B.A. and M.A. degrees. The strength of the teaching staff varies with the wealth of the institution, the number of the students, and the class of examinations for which candidates are sent up. Thus, the Presidency College in Calcutta has a principal, eleven professors, and two teachers of Sanskrit and Arabic. This staff provides for lectures being given in all the various subjects of all the examinations. A smaller college will be content with a principal, two professors, a pandit, and a maulavi. In their scheme of discipline, and in the academic

life of their students, Indian colleges have but little analogy to those of the older of the English universities, their resemblance being closer to those of Scotland and Germany. Residence in college buildings is not only not generally compulsory, but the colleges are few in which any systematic provision is made for control over the students' pursuits out of college hours. Boarding-houses are indeed attached to certain institutions, and their number increases year by year, but unless the student's home be at a distance from the collegiate city, and he have no relatives to receive him, it is seldom that he will incur the expense which residence involves. Two principal reasons account for this feature in our system. First, the initial outlay upon buildings is one from which Government and independent bodies alike shrink. For so poor is the Indian student that it would be impossible to demand of him any but the most moderate rent—a rent perhaps barely sufficient to cover the cost of the annual repairs. The second obstacle lies in the religious and social prejudices which force class from class. Not only does the Hindu refuse to eat with the Musalman, but from close contact with whole sections of his own co religionists he is shut off by the imperious ordinances of caste. Experience, however, has already proved that the barriers of custom are giving way. In the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab, where the residential system has been widely tried, the success has been considerable, and nothing but want of funds stands in the way of a fuller development. In the more important Bombay colleges, also, a considerable number of the students are in residence, in Bengal and Madras the system has been less fully recognised”<sup>1</sup>

In the years that have elapsed since the above words were written, the results of our system of education have come into clearer relief, and few Englishmen would now be found to take so optimistic a view as that expressed by the Education Commissioners of 1883. It cannot be said that our Indian colleges have fostered a genuine desire for learning, the students seldom pursue learning for its own sake, but for the most part solely to acquire a degree, and the object of

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, p. 273

a degree is that it constitutes a qualification for Government service or a profession. Nor can it be denied that the knowledge which an Indian graduate possesses is at best shallow, he has a smattering of several subjects, but he can hardly acquire in our colleges that mastery of any subject which would make his knowledge of it really valuable. No native of India, educated solely in his own country, has yet produced any work of original merit in any of the subjects taught in our colleges, nor has our teaching brought forth fruit in the application of western ideas and western science to Indian problems. Indian history and Indian archæology have been enriched by few contributions from Indian students, and little has so far been done by natives of the country to adapt and apply the experience of the west to the development of the material resources of India.

If, however, all this be admitted, and if the fermentation of ideas which the new learning has generated has not led to the results which were hoped for, it has on the other hand undoubtedly produced other results, the value of which must not be ignored. Speaking generally, the English-educated generation differs from that which preceded it rather on the moral than on the intellectual side. As public servants the higher integrity of those who have received an English education is a matter of common observation. The past of India has not been favourable to the cultivation of civic virtues, but to whatever extent movements for the suppression of undesirable customs, for the spread of education, or for other enlightened purposes, have been encouraged by natives of the country, it has been by those who have some tincture of western learning. These are results of importance, and it is remarkable that they have been gained from an education which

tively of his worldly means, the Muhammadan parent often chooses for his son while at school an education which will secure for him an honoured place among the learned of his own community, rather than one which will command success in the modern professions or in official life. The years which the young Hindu gives to English and mathematics in a public school, the young Muhammadan devotes in a *madrasa* to Arabic and the law and theology of Islam. When such an education is completed, it is to the vocation of a man of learning rather than to the more profitable professions that the thoughts of a promising Muhammadan youth naturally turn.”<sup>1</sup>

It must not be assumed from the fact that the Muhammadans look with little favour on our system that they are always less alive to the value of education than Hindus. In the United Provinces, for instance, the Muhammadan section of the population furnishes, in proportion to its numbers, more pupils than the Hindu. In spite of the disadvantages under which the Muhammadans are placed by their dislike of the education given in our colleges, they hold, in those provinces, in proportion to their numbers, a larger number of offices in the service of the Government than the Hindus. But this is not the case in the greater part of India, as a rule, the share of the Hindus in public employments much exceeds that of the Muhammadans.

These difficulties in regard to the higher education of Muhammadans have been similar in kind to those which have frequently arisen in our own country. That education should be severed from religion is an idea as repugnant to a good Muhammadan as it is to many Christians. There is little use in discussing whether our Government could have done otherwise than hold itself rigidly aloof from all concern with the religious

<sup>1</sup> *Report*, p. 505

education of the Muhammadans Similar questions hardly arise in regard to the education of Hindus, for their religion is not one that can be taught, or that they desire to see taught, for it has no fixed dogmas and tenets It may be true that it would have been politically wise to show greater sympathy with the belief and habits of thought of our Muhammadan subjects, and to treat more respectfully a religion and literature which they highly and naturally prize, but it was and is practically impossible for an English Government to act in these matters on any other rule than that which has been adopted It cannot teach in its own schools and colleges the doctrines of Islam

Thus it has come to pass that the colleges of the Government, as well as those conducted by missionaries, are all unacceptable to the Muhammadan who desires that his son shall be instructed in his own faith, and in the classical languages of his people

There was a man among the Muhammadans of northern India who believed that this difficult problem could be solved, and the results of his efforts have been so great that I must somewhat fully explain them He has shown, in my opinion, and, so far as I know, it has been shown nowhere else in India, how this difficult question of education, in some at least of its phases, should be treated

Sir Syad Ahmad Khán belonged, as his name betokens, to an ancient family that claims to be descended from the Prophet His ancestors came into India from Central Asia, and held high office under the Mughal emperors I was proud to call him my friend, and there was no man of any creed or country for whom I felt a more true respect It was soon after the mutinies of 1857 that I first knew him at Morádabad He was



The college receives grants-in-aid from the provincial Government, from the Nizam of Hyderabad, and other Muhammadan chiefs in India. It received an important donation from the Amir of Afghanistan on the occasion of his visit to India. The college has an English principal and four English professors, graduates of Oxford or Cambridge, an Indian professor of mathematics who won exceptional distinction at Cambridge and Gottingen, and several Indian assistant professors. Special provision, to which the Government substantially contributes, has been made for the teaching of Arabic according to the critical methods of European scholarship. For this purpose there is a professor of Arabic from Berlin, an Indian assistant professor, and a reader in Arabic from Arabia. The school attached to the college has an English headmaster, an English assistant master, and sixteen native masters, many of whom were formerly pupils in the college, and who from devotion to its interests have remained at Aligarh rather than seek more lucrative careers elsewhere.

The great majority of the students live in the quadrangles which are built round the college, the number in residence in 1910 was over 800. Religious instruction and the observation of religious rites are part of the daily exercise, but although the college was primarily intended for Muhammadans, and is essentially a Muhammadan institution, so much sympathy and generosity were shown by Hindu friends that its secular classes are open to Hindus also. In regard to scholarships and prizes the rules of the college show no partiality to Muhammadans, and separate boarding-houses are provided for Hindu students. The college is affiliated to the Allahabad University, and has fully held its own with other colleges in university examinations.

Students have come to it not only from distant provinces but from countries beyond the borders of India. Manly sports of all kinds are encouraged to an extent nowhere else known in India. The college has its gymnasium, its riding-school, its teams for hockey, football, and cricket.

In January 1877, Lord Lytton laid the foundation stone of new college buildings at Aligarh, and Sir Syad Ahmad Khán, in words addressed especially to the Viceroy and to his numerous English friends, spoke as follows —

“The personal honour,” he said, “which you have done me assures me of a great fact, and fills me with feelings of a much higher nature than mere personal gratitude. I am assured that you, who upon this occasion represent the British rule, have sympathies with our labours, and to me this assurance is very valuable, and a source of great happiness. At my time of life it is a comfort to me to feel that the undertaking which has been for many years, and is now, the sole object of my life, has roused, on the one hand, the energies of my own countrymen, and, on the other, has won the sympathy of our British fellow-subjects and the support of our rulers, so that when the few years I may still be spared are over, and when I shall be no longer amongst you, the college will still prosper, and succeed in educating my countrymen to have the same affection for their country, the same feelings of loyalty for the British rule, the same appreciation of its blessings, the same sincerity of friendship with our British fellow-subjects as have been the ruling feelings of my life.”

Sir Syad Ahmad Khán closed his long and noble life in March 1898. The bitter theological animosity which his religious teaching at first aroused had already begun to give way before the growing respect which his exertions on behalf of his people had called forth, and, since his death, even where his religious views have not been specifically accepted, the influence of his work

has been great. Even the opponents of some of his tenets admit with admiration the purity and nobility of his motives, and there can be no question that his teaching and his influence have had a profound effect upon a very important class of the Muhammadans of northern India. There are now many ardent workers in the cause of Muhammadan progress, a large proportion of whom were once students in the college at Aligarh<sup>1</sup>

To the end of his life Sir Syad Ahmad Khán laid the greatest emphasis upon the maintenance of a high moral character in the students of his college. He required that the young men trained in it should be virtuous in private life and upright in the public service, and always urged upon them the imperative duty of forwarding to the utmost of their capacity the welfare of their people.

It was the hope of Sir Syad Ahmad Khán that the Aligarh college might, as the Indian Education Commissioners wrote in words already quoted, help by its success and example to "solve the problem of national education" in India. He saw in imagination a time which he could not hope to see himself, in which the Muhammadans of India would possess, perhaps in Aligarh which he himself had chosen, an intellectual capital, a centre not only of learning and knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Sir Syad Ahmad Khan was for some years a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. He was also a member of the Legislative Council in his province, and Queen Victoria recognised his services by conferring on him the dignity of Knight Commander of the Star of India. Towards the end of 1902 an association was founded in London, under the name of the Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College, Aligarh, Association, with the object of promoting the cause of education among Muhammadans and the interests of the Aligarh college, and at the same time of assisting and advising any natives of India desiring help in regard to their manner of life and course of study in England. It has been formed by a number of Muhammadan gentlemen, many of them students in this country, and other Indians who sympathise with its objects. Many distinguished Englishmen are among its honorary members.

but of a purified and tolerant and progressive faith. His successors in the work that he initiated entertain the same aspirations. They urge that there are large sections of the Muhammadans, and not improbably other branches of the Indian community, which will never accept a system of secular education from which the religious element is sedulously excluded. They maintain that residence in college ought to be an essential condition for obtaining a degree, and that this condition can only be organised in India by the members of a community acquainted with all the requirements of its own co-religionists, for every class has its peculiar ordinances in regard to food and methods of life, for which parents will demand strict safeguards. To fulfil completely the objects which led to the foundation of the college at Aligarh, the establishment of denominational universities would be necessary, and it is suggested that as a beginning this college might be developed into a teaching university for Muhammadans. I believe, for my part, that this would be a measure of great utility, likely to lead to results of the utmost value. If the experiment proved successful, other bodies might obtain hereafter teaching universities of their own, each of them an educational centre, attracting to itself the members of its own religious belief, with its own traditions and intellectual life. Thus the difficulty connected with religious education might be solved, and solved by those who would be the most likely to make such education enlightened. These are aspirations which would require for their development much larger funds than those which the Aligarh college can now command, and the Muhammadan community is generally poor. There are many people in England anxious to assist, if they knew how, the work of Indian progress.

largely send their help to the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental college at Aligarh they could find no more certain way of doing good<sup>1</sup>

I shall refer in a subsequent chapter<sup>2</sup> to the colleges that have been established for the education of young Chiefs and nobles

Very useful colleges have also been established for special objects, such as the study of medicine and surgery, engineering, and agriculture

The medical colleges deserve particular notice, for no educational institutions in India have been more remarkably successful. There are more than 1700 hospitals and dispensaries in British India, in charge of Indians who have received a medical education in our colleges and schools. Among all the benefits conferred upon the people by our rule, there is perhaps no one more highly and universally valued than this. Many of the native surgeons are extremely skilful, and perform operations in a manner that would not discredit the surgeons of London or Paris. More than 27,000,000

<sup>1</sup> [The last *Quinquennial Review of Education in India* (1902-7) records considerable improvement in Muhammadan education. This is due partly to the special measures taken by the Government to provide suitable facilities, but in a greater degree to the change which is taking place in the feeling of the Muhammadan community towards education. There is less opposition to education among Muhammadans in general, and their leaders in conferences and in public meetings show a wise appreciation of its vital importance to the advancement of their community. The special measures taken by the provincial Governments follow two lines—(1) to make the common schools and colleges attractive to Muhammadans by offering scholarships, and by providing Muhammadan boarding houses and Muhammadan inspectors, and (2) to induce the teachers of the *mullah* or *maktab* schools, where the Koran is taught by rote, to add secular instruction to their curriculum, and to introduce the teaching of English into the *madrassas* where Arabic and Persian are taught to older boys. During the last quinquennium the number of Muhammadans under instruction in public institutions increased by 26 per cent—an increase greater than has ever been recorded within a similar period. The school attendance of Muhammadans in proportion to their numbers is now little below that of the population at large. Their deficiencies are greatest in respect of secondary and collegiate education.]

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XXIV

patients are treated every year at the Indian <sup>netting</sup> hospitals and dispensaries

Science has until recent years received in India, as in England, scant encouragement from the state, but that it has not been altogether neglected is shown by the work performed by the departments of survey, geology, botany, meteorology, forests, and agriculture. Lord Curzon during his viceroyalty did much for the promotion of scientific research. The geological department has been strengthened, medical research laboratories established, posts created for the study of agricultural chemistry, of the diseases of cattle, of plants and insect pests, and a Board of Scientific Advice constituted to review and co-ordinate the work of the several departments, and to advise the Government on scientific matters.

One other admirable institution must be noticed, the Pasteur Institute at the hill station of Kasauli below Simla. It is performing a noble work in the service of humanity, and saves annually many persons from the peril of a violent death. In India, as in other eastern countries, hydrophobia is of common occurrence. A similar institution has been established in southern India.

Little has as yet been accomplished in the various branches of technical instruction. To attain success such instruction must rest upon a sound system of general education, and the deficiencies of the Indian system are only now being remedied. But a useful beginning has been made, especially in Bombay and the United Provinces. Through the liberality of a wealthy Parsee an Indian institute of science has been founded at Bangalore. At Pusa in Bengal a first-class agricultural college and research institute has been established for the use of India generally, and the

larger provinces now possess their own agricultural colleges. There is a well-equipped and highly efficient engineering college at Rurki in the United Provinces, and, in the same neighbourhood, a forestry college and research institute for the training of provincial forest officers.

In several provinces schools of art have been established, and presided over by highly accomplished men. Their utility in the matter of decorated art is more than doubtful. India has nothing to learn from us in this respect. We have done much to debase her beautiful and still living arts, and almost all the influence that we have exercised has been destructive. A wide field, on the other hand, is open for practical training in many handicrafts and manufactures.

The systems followed in different provinces in respect of secondary schools vary so much that no description would be generally applicable. In nearly every district there is at least one 'high school,' which teaches up to the entrance examination of the provincial university. In the lower classes English is introduced as a subject of instruction, while in the higher classes it becomes the medium of instruction. Many of these schools have been established by missionaries, and receive grants-in-aid. In the smaller towns there is often a middle school, which is either a superior vernacular school, or an English school without the upper classes of a 'high school.'

Although the number of the natives of India who are good English scholars is small, there are many who have learned enough of our language for the ordinary clerical work of the public offices, and they hold almost all the minor appointments of this kind. They are a very useful and efficient class, but they have seldom any pretensions to be called educated men. The great majority of the young men at our higher schools and

colleges go there because it is a certain way of getting on in life. It is a very successful way both for themselves and for their employers, but the majority of them are content with the smallest amount of English education which enables them to perform their work. There is a more ambitious minority, consisting of students who qualify themselves for higher employment. They attain to responsible office in the executive service, and supply the ranks of the native judiciary. Some of them have reached, as judges of the High Courts, the highest judicial rank which any one, whether he be native or English, can attain in India. Many practise with great success at the bar, others are professors and masters in the colleges and schools, or in charge of the numerous hospitals and dispensaries.

Although our educational system has been, in some important respects, successful, the number of natives of India who can be called highly educated, according to a European standard, is almost infinitesimally small in proportion to the vast population of the country. Sir Henry Maine, commenting on the fact that in the twenty years ending with 1883 not more than 5000 M A and B A degrees were given altogether, wrote as follows — "I will assume that every man who has taken a Bachelor of Arts degree is sufficiently educated to have valuable ideas on politics, and for the purpose of including all who, in any sense, can be called educated men, I will multiply the total by five. That gives 25,000 Indian gentlemen of an education and age to take an interest or a part in politics"<sup>1</sup>. Sir Henry Maine added that he thought it probable that his estimate of 25,000 was much above the mark. Since that opinion was given the number

<sup>1</sup> "The Reign of Queen Victoria" *India*, vol. 1. p. 526



of graduates has largely increased. In the ten years ending with 1901-2, the number of M.A. degrees given in India was altogether 1185, and the number of B.A. degrees was 12,533<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this increase of numbers, I do not doubt that the conclusion stated by Sir Henry Maine remains substantially true I doubt whether out of the almost infinitesimally small proportion of the population of British India who possess any education at all, there are as many as 25,000 men who, judged by a high European standard, can be called educated Nor can it be doubted that the assumption that every man with a B.A. degree can properly be called educated is, in India, far too sanguine. The female population of India exceeds 144,000,000, and among them there are probably not 1000 women to whom the term educated could properly be applied

"Where so much is heard as at present of the literate claims of India," wrote Mr Baines in concluding his chapter on the "Literacy of the Population" in his Census report of 1891, "it is just as well to define the limitations of that term It may thus be judged how far the *φῶς ἀφ'εγγύης* of the handful of people to whom, under the most liberal interpretation, the term can be said to apply, is to be held capable of illuminating the thoughts and conditions of the vast mass from whom the very education, apart from the traditions, of that close corporation, inclines them to stand aloof"

<sup>1</sup> [The total annual output of graduates from the Indian universities averaged 1935 in the last three years of the quinquennial period 1902-7 Of these 540 became Bachelors of Law and proceeded to the bar This left a yearly supply of 1400 graduates available for the other professions, for the branches of the public service in which graduates are employed, for teaching in colleges and schools and for service in the native states It is contended in the *Fifth Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India*, from which these figures are taken, that these figures do not bear out the statement frequently made that the output of graduates is in excess of the demand for them The number of matriculated students who do not succeed in graduating is no doubt excessive The wastage is great. (See page 278 )]

The number of Brahmans who are more or less learned in ancient Sanskrit literature is considerable, although there are not many great scholars. With rare exceptions, they have no acquaintance with any branches of western knowledge, nor any desire to obtain it.

I have spoken of the controversy of 1835, which, under Lord Macaulay's influence, ended with the decision that English literature and science, taught through the medium of the English language, must be the basis of higher education in India. Very little science was taught in those days even in England, and still less in India, it was the study, not of English science, but of English classical literature, that was practically encouraged, and so it has been ever since. As Sir Henry Maine has often pointed out, the strict and sober tests of truth which modern science can alone supply were exactly the element that was wanting in the education of orientals, and especially of Hindus. Native thought and literature, as he says, "is elaborately inaccurate, it is supremely and deliberately careless of all precision in magnitude, number, and time." "The Indian intellect stood in need, beyond everything else, of stricter criteria of truth. It required a treatment to harden and brace it, and scientific teaching was exactly the tonic which its infirmities called for." Though matters in this respect are better than they were, science still holds a secondary place in Indian universities.<sup>1</sup> We may find an illustration of the truth of Sir Henry Maine's remarks in the remarkable success achieved by natives of India

<sup>1</sup> [Of every 100 graduates from Indian universities, 85 graduate in Arts, 2 in Science, 9 in Medicine, and 4 in Engineering. But science is not so completely neglected as would appear from these figures. Science subjects are among the optional subjects for the B.A. degree, and the returns show that at least one third of the graduates in Arts take one or more science subjects. The teaching, however, is defective, and few colleges are properly equipped with laboratories for practical instruction.]

and disloyal writing of a section of the English-speaking natives of India. This is chiefly true of the Bengalis. Many of them are gifted with a remarkable faculty of fluent speech and writing. Although to our taste their English is often antiquated and magniloquent, few foreigners master so completely the difficulties of our language. Some of their newspapers, published in English, are, so far as the style is concerned, well written, but, with honourable exceptions, little else can be said in their favour. The vernacular press of Bengal has been sometimes distinctly seditious and shamefully scurrilous. This is by no means equally true of some of the other provinces, where many of the newspapers, although they may have little or no value, have at least been conducted with propriety and decorum.

I do not propose to describe how it came to pass that no means were for many years provided by the law in India for punishing the authors of publications that were unquestionably seditious, which stirred up dangerous strife between men of different religions, or were used as the means of levying blackmail from native princes and native officials. I doubt whether there is any civilised country in the world where the things would be tolerated which, until a few years ago, were tolerated in India, or where liberty of the press was interpreted as it was interpreted there. When, in 1835, Lord Macaulay rightly and successfully advocated the abolition of the restrictions then existing on the press in India—restrictions which no reasonable man would desire to see restored—he said that if the law that he proposed were adopted, “no person would be able to print or publish sedition or calumny without imminent risk of punishment.” Lord Macaulay’s anticipations were far from being fulfilled. For many years there

was no sedition however flagrant, and no calumny however virulent, that could not be published in India with no risk at all. The Government of Lord Lytton attempted to deal with this subject by a legislative measure of extreme moderation, which placed no real restrictions on the freedom of the press. Soon afterwards there was a change of Government in England, and all the checks imposed on seditious publications were removed. The evil became worse than ever, until, in 1898, after seditious writing in the public press, especially in Bombay, had become intolerable and politically dangerous—when serious riots had occurred and British officers had been murdered—it was admitted by all reasonable men that action could no longer be delayed. The penal code and the code of criminal procedure were amended by the Government of Lord Elgin in a manner which placed no restrictions on the absolute freedom of the press to criticise or condemn, in language consistent with loyalty to our rule, any of the proceedings of the Government, but which at the same time brought the law into a shape in which it fulfilled the requirements declared, more than sixty years before, to be necessary by so true a friend to the liberty of the press as Lord Macaulay.<sup>1</sup>

## NOTES TO CHAPTER XVI

### 1 LORD CURZON'S EDUCATIONAL REFORMS. (Page 282)

The effect of the impulse which Lord Curzon during his Viceroyalty gave to education in India in all grades is seen in the Government of India's progress-report on education for the five years 1902-7 (*Fifth Quinquennial Review, 1909*). The following passages are extracted from it

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<sup>1</sup> [Since 1906 it has been found necessary to take still more stringent measures to control the license of the newspaper press in India and to deal with the disaffection which it has stimulated, if not created. See note at the end of the chapter.]

"The universities have been reconstituted' under the Act of 1904, have revised their regulations, have instituted the regular inspection of colleges, and have received powers, which they will doubtless develop, of becoming teaching bodies. Colleges, which can no longer be admitted to affiliation or retain it without satisfying the standards newly laid down by the Act, have set to work to remedy the defects which inspection has disclosed and to confine their teaching to those subjects for which they are properly equipped, and they are being aided in carrying out these improvements by grants which depend upon inspection. Both colleges and schools are making better provision for the residence of those students who do not live with their parents.

"Stricter conditions have been laid down and are being enforced for secondary schools, without which they cannot obtain or keep the privilege of recognition. The system of examinations has been simplified, and increased provision has been made for the training of teachers. But both in their buildings and in their equipment and in the quality of their teaching, the secondary schools leave much to be desired, and their condition was being examined by local Governments at the close of the quinquennium, and measures for their further improvement were being considered.

"Primary schools have increased considerably both in number and in strength, although as yet this increase does not nearly reach the point of fully satisfying the demand. Examinations have been simplified, and the system of awarding grants on the results of individual examinations has been almost entirely abolished. The buildings have been improved, the pay of teachers, though still very low, has been raised, the courses of studies have been widened, many of the text-books have been re-written so as to deal in simpler language with more appropriate topics, and those modes of teaching which aim at teaching children in observation and intelligent reasoning are being more widely adopted. Increased provision has been made for training primary teachers. The course of training has been extended to two years where it previously fell short of this, and a better class of teachers is being obtained.

"The education of girls, almost the only feature in the educational system the improvement of which is not chiefly a question of money, is spreading more rapidly than before, though it is still confined to a very small fraction of the population. The demand for it is now found to be increasing, and the chief difficulty in meeting the demand lies in the want of qualified teachers. More facilities have, however, been provided for training women teachers, and the number of students under training has been thereby increased.

"The greatest industry of the country, agriculture, will now possess

a central institution for teaching and research, on a scale not previously attempted in this country, and the provincial agricultural colleges are being correspondingly improved. A scheme for providing a technical institution of the highest rank for the benefit of other industries has been brought near to completion, and, in the meantime, scholarships have been established which enable selected students at the rate of ten a year to attend technical institutions in other countries, and are beginning to produce a supply of men qualified to take part in the scientific development of industries. A school for coal-mining has been established, and arrangements have been made to add to and improve the institutions at which weaving and other industries are taught. Formerly one cause assigned for the backwardness of technical education was the reluctance of the educated classes to avail themselves of it, but this reluctance is fast disappearing and the demand is now in many places strong"

## 2 INDISCIPLINE IN INDIAN SCHOOLS (Page 299)

The *Fifth Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India* in the chapter on secondary schools contains much evidence on this subject in the form of extracts from the reports of inspectors and other educational officers. One such officer writes "Discipline in the sense that it is understood in English schools is, of course, unknown as yet in the privately managed schools of this province (Bengal), chiefly because the headmaster is possessed of little or no authority. As Indian parents have unfortunately not yet learnt the value of school discipline, and for the most part resent any punishment inflicted on their boys, it is obvious that a headmaster who is a disciplinarian occupies an almost impossible position." Of Bombay it is reported that "the efforts of teachers, especially of native teachers, to bring up children in the habit of reverence for age and respect for authority have been greatly hampered by the acts, the speeches and the writings of foolish and irresponsible political agitators. Parents are now realising that they can command neither the obedience nor the respect of their children, and the natural leaders of the people are becoming disgusted and enraged by the rudeness and disrespect to which they are subjected from undisciplined youth." In 1905 the Government of India were memorialised on the subject by a number of inhabitants of Bengal, who asked for the introduction of moral teaching into all institutions in India. The Government returned a sympathetic reply, concurring in the desire that the ethical side of the instruction imparted in schools and colleges should be emphasized, and invoking the support of a vigorous public opinion, and specifying the measures which the educational authorities might properly take. Since then some improvement has been effected, but much remains to be done.

### 3 RECENT LEGISLATIVE MEASURES AGAINST SEDITION AND FOR THE BETTER CONTROL OF THE PRESS. (Page 305)

Between November 1907 and August 1910 no fewer than five Acts for strengthening the law against sedition, political crime, and press offences were placed on the Indian statute book. Early in 1907 it was clear that the agitation against the 'partition' was running into grave excesses in the two Bengals, and that a similar agitation was on foot in the distant province of the Punjab, where serious riots had disturbed the peace of two of the largest cities. The first efforts of the Government were directed against the leading instigators of sedition. A few of the most dangerous spirits were placed under detention without trial by warrant of the Governor-General in Council issued under Bengal Regulation 3 of 1818. A temporary Ordinance was made by the Governor-General in exercise of the emergency power given to him by section 23 of the Indian Councils Act of 1861, empowering district magistrates to prohibit seditious meetings in 'proclaimed areas'. The next step was to replace the Ordinance within the six months of its legal life by an Act of the legislature. The Seditious Meetings Act came into force on the 1st November 1907. Its duration was limited to three years, but this has since been extended. During the next six months the seditious movement in Bengal and Eastern Bengal assumed still graver forms. Two European ladies were killed by a bomb at Muzaffarpur. The magistrate of Dacca was shot by a revolver at Goalundo. Three attempts were made to blow up the railway train in which the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was travelling. A bomb factory was discovered in Calcutta, and the existence of a widespread conspiracy instigated from beyond seas, and aiming at the subversion of British rule in India, was revealed. In the extremist press political assassination was openly justified and advocated. Unlawful associations or *samitis* were formed, which enrolled impressionable students, taught them drill and the use of arms, and incited them to terrorise the moderates, and to commit crime and robbery. In June 1908 the Legislative Council sitting at Simla passed two Acts to meet the emergencies of the situation. The one was directed against the unlawful use of explosives, and the other armed the executive with powers to suppress newspapers advocating murder or violence. In December of the same year, as the situation showed no improvement, the Legislative Council sitting in Calcutta passed another important Act, which provided a special procedure and a special court for the trial of intricate cases arising out of anarchical conspiracy, and which also gave the executive much needed powers for the suppression of the *samitis*. At the time of the passing of the Newspapers Act Lord Minto had

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pretty clearly indicated that in his opinion further legislation for the general control of the press would be necessary. The course of the anarchical movement in 1909 added weight to his warning. In July Sir Curzon-Wallis and Dr Lacaze were assassinated in London and in December



the furtherance or discussion of any subject likely to cause disturbance or public excitement, or of any political subject, may be held unless either three days' notice has been given to the head of the police, or permission to hold the meeting obtained. There are penalties for breach of these provisions. The district magistrate has power to prohibit any meeting which is likely to promote sedition or disaffection or to cause a disturbance of the public tranquillity.

*The Explosive Substances Act* (vi. of 1908) The Act, following the lines of the English Explosive Substances Act of 1883, provides for the punishment of any person who causes an explosion likely to endanger life or property, or who attempts to cause such an explosion, or makes or has in his possession any explosive substance with intent to endanger life or property. It further makes the manufacture or possession of explosive substances for any other than a lawful object a substantive offence.

*The Newspapers (Incitements to Offences) Act* (vii. of 1908) The Act empowers the district magistrate, when so authorised by the local Government, to declare a printing-press forfeited in which a newspaper containing an incitement to murder or to any offence under the Explosive Substances Act or to any act of violence has been printed, and to seize the press and all copies of the newspaper. The magistrate's order is conditional, and an appeal against it may be preferred to the High Court within fifteen days.

*The Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act* (xiv of 1908). The Act provides a special procedure for the more speedy trial of certain offences, and for the prohibition of associations dangerous to the public peace. The scheduled offences, to which the special procedure is made applicable, include criminal conspiracies against the State and other heinous crimes. Before the special procedure can be applied to an inquiry into and trial of an offence, the sanction of the Governor-General in Council is required, and sanction is not given except in cases of the gravest character. The inquiry made by the magistrate is of an *ex parte* nature, the evidence being taken *in camera* and without the presence of the accused person or persons. The case, if committed for trial, goes before a special bench of three judges of the High Court, by whom it is heard without a jury. The second part of the Act declares all associations to be unlawful which encourage or aid persons to commit acts of violence or intimidation or of which the members habitually commit such acts, and further empowers the Governor-General in Council to declare any association unlawful that he considers a danger to the public peace. Penalties are provided for belonging or contributing to, or managing, an unlawful association.

*The Indian Press Act* (i. of 1910) The Act provides for the better control of the press. It requires that any person who after its passing becomes the keeper of a printing press shall deposit security. If such

a person, having given security, prints or publishes a book, newspaper or other document containing prohibited matter (as defined in the Act), the local Government may declare the security and all copies of the offending publication to be forfeited. If he deposits fresh security, he may continue to work his press. But for a second offence the local Government may, besides declaring the security to be forfeited, confiscate the printing-press. Publishers of newspapers, as distinct from keepers of printing-presses, are similarly required, if they are registered after the passing of the Act, to give security, and are dealt with in the same way as keepers of printing presses, if they publish prohibited matter. Keepers of printing presses and publishers of newspapers registered before the passing of the Act are exempt from the requirement as to furnishing security, so long as they do not print or publish prohibited matter. But if they offend in this respect, the local Government may require security from them. When security has been given, the procedure in the event of subsequent offences is as above described. Local Governments are also empowered to declare any book, newspaper, or other document, wherever printed, to be forfeited which contains prohibited matter. The declaration has to be notified in the official gazette and has to state the grounds of the local Government's opinion. Customs officers and post offices are given special powers to detain suspected books, etc. Against any order of forfeiture made under the Act an appeal may be preferred to the High Court, and such appeals are heard by a special Court of three judges. The definition of prohibited matter given in the Act is detailed and comprehensive. It includes incitements to murder or acts of violence, inferences, suggestions, allusions, metaphors tending to seduce soldiers from their allegiance, or to bring the British Government or any native chief, or any class of His Majesty's subjects, into contempt, or to intimidate public servants or private individuals.

## CHAPTER XVII

### RACES—LANGUAGES—CASTES—RELIGIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Races—Aryans—Dravidians—Languages of India—Distribution of population among various Religions—The Hindus—Animism—Religion of the Hindus—Illustrations of the Religion of an Indian province—Brahmanism—Caste—Reverence for Brahmans—Caste not confined to Hindus—The Muhammadans in India—Their distribution—Animosity between Hindus and Muhammadans—Causes of political anxiety—Increase of Muhammadanism in Bengal—Buddhists—Christianity in India—Jains—Sikhs—Persia.

I do not propose to say more than a few words regarding the ethnographical history of India. Knowledge of the subject is still in its infancy. There can, however, be no doubt that some, at least, of the conclusions drawn from modern philological and physiological research, and from the ancient literature of India, must contain a considerable amount of truth.

It appears that in times of which we have no historical record, there came into north-western India from Central Asia a race of men called Arya. They were a branch of the Indo-European stock and spoke a language which in its literary form and at a later date was known as Sanskrit, and which was closely allied to the languages of Greeks, Romans, Celts, and Germans. Gradually they spread themselves over northern India, expelling or enslaving the races with whom they came

into contact. These were dark-coloured people, inferior in all the arts of civilised life to the Aryan immigrants. In the north, under Aryan domination, the Hindu polity and religion grew up as they are described in ancient Sanskrit literature. Many vestiges of the lower races still remain, especially in the wilder and more inaccessible tracts, but throughout the Indo-Gangetic plain their subjugation was complete. In the southern parts of India the Aryans never established themselves in general possession, but the Brahmans succeeded in obtaining recognition for their claim to universal veneration, and in including the local religions within the pale of Hinduism. The so-called Dravidian races of southern India differ greatly in physical characteristics from the peoples of the north.

Throughout almost the whole of the countries of northern and north-western India, containing a population of some one hundred and sixty millions, Aryan supremacy, although not necessarily Aryan origin, for language is no test of race, is shown by the languages of the people. Although these differ greatly among themselves, the vocabulary of all of them is mainly Sanskritic. The most widely spoken of these, and of all the languages of India, although its dialects are very numerous, is Hindi. It is spoken, in various forms, by some ninety millions of people. Seventeen millions speak Punjābī, ten millions Gujarāthī, eighteen millions Marāthī, and more than forty millions Bengālī.

The Dravidian languages of southern India have no affinity to those of the Aryan group. They are spoken by more than fifty millions of people. The chief of them are Tāmil, Telugu, Kanarese, and Malayālam, but there are many dialects.

Other distinct classes of languages are those known

must be noticed. I quote, from the report of Mr Baines, Dr Tiele's interpretation of the word —

"Animism is the belief in the existence of souls or spirits, of which only the powerful—those on which man feels himself dependent, and before which he stands in awe—acquire the rank of divine beings, and become objects of worship. These spirits are conceived as moving freely through earth and air, and, either of their own accord, or because conjured by some spell, and thus under compulsion, appearing to men (*Spiritism*). But they may also take up their abode, either permanently or temporarily, in some object, whether lifeless or living it matters not, and this object, as endowed with higher power, is then worshipped or employed to protect individuals or communities (*Fetichism*). Spiritism, essentially the same as what is now called Spiritualism, must be carefully distinguished from Fetichism, but can only rarely be separated from it."

"In the stage of development (Mr Baines continues) in which we find Animism in India, it has passed from its archaic and indeterminate shape into a collection of polydaimonistic tribal religions, in which spells, magic, and exorcism are all prominent. In this stage the malevolent spirits are considered the more important, and little notice is taken of the good. The main object, in the first place, is to get power over the spirits by magic, and, in a higher stage of belief, by gifts or homage. These notions are to be found in every stage of evolution in different parts of India, but the term Animistic has been restricted, in the census tables, to a certain class of the community. As in the case of several other forms of creed in that country, it is necessary to define the scope of the title negatively, or by explaining what is not included under it, rather than what is. In anticipation, therefore, of an explanation of the term Hindu, it may be stated that it was the intention of the framers of the rules for enumeration, that under the head of Animistic should come all members of the forest tribes who were not locally acknowledged to be Hindu, Musalman, Christian, or Buddhist by religion. The distinction between the tribal form of faith and that of the lower grades of Bráhmānic community is very elastic. But the distinction is really of little moment, because every stratum of Indian society is more or less saturated with Animistic conceptions,

but little raised above those which predominate in the early stages of religious development.”<sup>1</sup>

Sir Alfred Lyall has given, in his *Asiatic Studies*, an interesting account of modern Hinduism

“The term ‘Hindu’ is not,” he writes, “a national, or even a geographical denomination, but signifies vaguely a fortuitous conglomeration of sects, tribes, hereditary professions and castes” The Hindu religion is “a religious chaos” “I doubt whether any one who has not lived among Hindus can adequately realise the astonishing variety of their ordinary religious beliefs, the constant changes of shape and colour which these beliefs undergo, the extraordinary fecundity of the superstitious sentiment.” Hinduism is “a tangled jungle of disorderly superstitions, ghosts, and demons, demi-gods, and deified saints, household gods, tribal gods, local gods, universal gods, with their countless shrines and temples, and the din of their discordant rites—deities who abhor a fly’s death, and those who delight still in human victims.”<sup>2</sup>

If a religion be a creed with certain distinctive tenets, the Hinduism of the mass of the people is not a religion at all Their religion is in no way represented by the sacred books of Sanskrit literature The sanctity of the Vedas is an accepted article of faith among Hindus who have heard of their existence, but they have nothing to do with the existing popular beliefs The Purānas, and other comparatively late works, which Elphinstone says may be called the scriptures of modern Hinduism, have no practical connection with the religion of the great majority of the population Some of their gods and goddesses and heroes, indeed, have almost everywhere, in one form or

<sup>1</sup> *General Report on the Census of India*, 1891, p. 157 In the corresponding report on the census of 1901 there is a fuller description of the leading features of Animism in India and of its relation to popular Hinduism, but the general purport is very much the same

<sup>2</sup> *Asiatic Studies*, p. 2

aboriginal, non-Aryan, or casteless tribes," and nothing in Hinduism is more remarkable than the manner in which it has gone on, and still goes on, increasing the number of its adherents

Sir Herbert Risley, of the Indian Civil Service, has given from his own observation, in his work on *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, a work that is the most important contribution hitherto made to Indian ethnography, illustrations of the processes by which these conversions to Hinduism are accomplished. Sometimes, as he shows, the leading men of an aboriginal tribe, desirous of increased dignity, manage to enrol themselves in one of the recognised castes

"They usually set up as Rajputs, their first step being to start a Brahman priest, who invents for them a mythical ancestor, supplies them with a family miracle connected with the locality where their tribes are settled, and discovers that they belong to some hitherto unheard-of clan of the great Rajput community. In the earlier stages of their advancement they generally find great difficulty in getting their daughters married, as they will not marry within their own tribe, and Rajputs of their adopted caste will of course not intermarry with them. But after a generation or two their persistency obtains its reward, and they intermarry, if not with pure Rajputs, at least with a superior order of manufactured Rajputs, whose promotion into the Brahmanical system dates far enough back for the steps by which it was gained to have been forgotten. Thus a real change of blood may take place, while in any case the tribal name is completely lost, and with it all possibility of accurately separating this class of people from the Hindus of purer blood, and of assigning them to any particular non-Aryan tribe. They have been absorbed in the fullest sense of the word, and henceforth pose, and are locally accepted, as high-caste Hindus. All stages of the process, family miracle and all, can be illustrated by actual instances taken from the leading families in Chota Nagpur.

"In other cases whole tribes or sections of tribes (Sir Herbert Risley tells us) may become enrolled in the ranks of Hinduism as





promoted to the Hindu Pantheon in the guise of a special incarnation of one of the greatest gods, the tribal chief sets up a family priest, starts a more or less romantic family legend, and in course of time blossoms forth as a new variety of Rajput. His people follow his lead, and make haste to sacrifice their women at the shrine of social distinction. Infant-marriage, with all its attendant horrors, is introduced, widows are forbidden to marry again, and divorce, which plays a great and, on the whole, a useful part in tribal society, is summarily abolished. Throughout all these changes, which strike deep into the domestic life of the people, the fiction is maintained that no real change has taken place, and every one believes, or affects to believe, that things are with them as they have been since the beginning of time."<sup>1</sup>

Sir Herbert Risley adds that it is curious to observe that the operation of these tendencies has been quickened, and the sphere of their action enlarged, by the extension in India of railway communication. Pilgrimages become easier and more pleasant, and "Siva and Krishna drive out the tribal gods as surely as grey shirtings displace the more durable hand-woven cloth."

With regard to the worship of the gods, the important matter to the Hindu peasant is the propitiation of the tribal or other deity who attends to the affairs of his own particular caste or occupation, and of the local gods and ghosts and saints and demons who haunt every hill and grove and village. Their names are often unknown, or little cared for, outside the limits of their personal or territorial authority, and their numbers are countless. These powers, for the most part malevolent, go on multiplying or perishing, they are maintained or degraded according to their deserts, frequent miracles, the stream of which in India is never-ending, support the faith of their devotees or transfer it to some new object, and all of them are readily accepted as worthy

<sup>1</sup> *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Introduction, p. xxviii

of veneration or fear by the Brahmans, the gates of the Hindu Pantheon are never shut. These local gods and evil powers are at all times on the alert to resent and punish neglect and disrespect. Little is to be hoped from them, but everything is to be feared. Every disease and every misfortune is more or less dependent on their influence, and the life of the Indian peasant is bound up with the observances required to give a certain amount of security against this ever-present danger. In southern India, and in lower Bengal, the number and power of local deities and malevolent spirits are even greater than in the north. "It almost seems (Mr Baines observes) that the weaker the race the more numerous and bloodthirsty are its gods, and the greater the influence of the sacerdotal system of caste."

In the Indian superstitions there is almost always a grotesque element. I will give a few examples of them, they will not be applicable to any one extensive tract, for custom in regard to these matters is infinitely various, but they will not on this account be less characteristic.<sup>1</sup>

The most dreaded of the minor deities in northern India are those who cause special diseases. The small-pox goddess, Sitala, is the eldest and most formidable of seven fatal sisters. She is worshipped by women and children only, and enormous numbers of them attend her shrines. She usually rides on a donkey, and therefore it is proper to give a feed of grain at her shrine to the donkey of the village potter, first waving the grain

<sup>1</sup> I have taken these illustrations of local superstitions from Sir Denzil Ibbetson's "Report on the Census of the Punjab," from Sir Henry Elliot's *Races of the North Western Provinces*, and from the *Report on the Settlement of Bareilly*, by Mr Moens. I have often given the words of the original authors, but so much has been omitted or altered that I have not marked all my borrowings as quotations, and it has therefore to be explained that nearly all that is said on this subject is due to the authorities that I have named, and especially to Sir Denzil Ibbetson's interesting Report.

and white cocks over the head of the child to be protected. At the same time black dogs are fed, fowls, pigs, goats, and cocoa-nuts are offered. An adult who has had smallpox must let a pig loose for Sitala, or he will be attacked again. If an epidemic of smallpox appears in the village the goddess is punished by the cessation of all worship and offerings, but so long as the disease is absent nothing is too good for her. She is easily frightened or deceived, and when a woman has lost a son by smallpox, and fears that another may be attacked, it is desirable to let the goddess understand that the second son is of no value, and, as evidence of this, to send him round the village in a dust-pan, or to dress him in old rags borrowed from the neighbours.

Everything is to be feared from the malevolent dead. A man who has died a violent death, or without sons, is dangerous, and it is prudent to erect a shrine to him. One of these ghosts of great fame in the Delhi territory is Teja. He was taking milk to his aged mother when a snake bit him on the nose. He begged to be allowed to take the milk to her, and then came back to be again bitten and killed. These evil ghosts are especially dangerous to women and children after eating sweet-meats, and a pinch of salt should be taken as a precaution. They are fond of going down your throat when you yawn. They cannot set foot on the ground, so it is wise in haunted places to sleep on the ground and not on a bed. Very often they take up their abode in animals dangerous to human life.

The Evil eye is more common and dangerous than the jettatura of Naples. Malignant influence is often exercised by inanimate objects. I have myself been officially obliged, in one of the Hill districts, to interfere on behalf of a considerable population, to give

protection against a small white house newly built in a conspicuous situation, the owner of which sorrowfully admitted that, through no fault of his own, it was undoubtedly bringing ruin on his neighbours. Sir Alfred Lyall has given examples of the worship of inanimate objects of strange appearance. I knew a case in which the sight of a distant mountain peak of peculiar form had caused for many years the complete abandonment of a village and of a rich tract of cultivated land. Good and bad omens are innumerable. Two water-pots, one on the top of the other, are especially fortunate if they be left to the right in passing, and the same rule is applicable to cows and antelopes, a snake, on the other hand, should be passed on the left.

I will give, merely as illustrations, a few examples of local superstitions —

"If," writes Sir Denzil Ibbetson, referring to the Punjab, "a boy be born, a net is hung over the doorway, a chain stuck on to the wall, and a fire lighted on the threshold, which is kept up night and day to prevent evil spirits from passing. The swaddling-clothes should be borrowed from another person's house. On the night of the sixth day the whole household sits up and watches over the child, for on that day his destiny is determined, especially as to immunity from smallpox. If he go hungry on that day he will be stingy all his life. None of these precautions are taken on the birth of a girl."

No agricultural operations can be carried on without the performance of certain ceremonies, and the superstitions connected with them are endless. I will give one or two illustrations taken from the Agra Province and the Punjab. This is the manner in which the planting of sugar-cane is commenced in parts of Rohilkhand. When the ground is ready the plough is worshipped and decorated. This goes first, and is

followed in the same furrow by a second. Behind this comes the sower, wearing silver ornaments, a necklace of flowers, a red mark on his forehead, and lamp-black on his eyelids. Before beginning his work he is regaled with ghee and sweetmeats. He strews the bits of sugar-cane into the furrow at intervals of about a foot. He is called the elephant. Behind him comes a second man, called the crow, who picks up any bits which have not fallen into the furrow. A third man, called the donkey, supplies the elephant with sugar-cane from a basket tied to his waist. It is a fortunate omen if a man on horseback comes into the field while this is going on. When the work is done, all who have been engaged in it go to the house of the cultivator of the field and have a dinner, composed of pulse, milk and spices, rice, and cakes of unleavened bread. In some districts the wife of the elephant follows with a ball of cotton. At some unexpected moment he turns on her, and after a sham contest bears her to the ground. The cotton, being forced out of her hand, spreads upon the ground, and the parties present exclaim, "May our sugar-cane grow and spread like this cotton." Not the least essential part of this and all other proceedings is that the Brahmans must be fed and proper offerings given to them.

Sir Denzil Ibbetson gives some examples of superstitions in the Punjab regarding cattle. Nothing connected with them, such as butter or leather, must be bought or sold on Saturday or Sunday. The manner in which, when cattle-plague first appears in a village, it can be cast out, and transferred to the next village in the east, is curious. All field work, grinding, and cooking are stopped on Saturday morning, and on Sunday night a procession takes a buffalo skull, a lamb, sticks of the

*śi*as tree, butter-milk, fire, and sacred grass to the boundary, over which they are thrown, while a gun is fired three times to frighten away the disease "Last year a man was killed in an affray resulting from an attempt to transfer the plague in this manner. A villager in Gurgáon once captured the cattle-plague in its material shape, and would not let it go till it promised never to remain where he or his descendants were present, and his progeny are still sent for when murrain has fastened on a village, to walk round it and call on the plague to fulfil its contract "

Great power over milch-cattle is exercised by the *singhs*, or snake-gods, and the milk of the eleventh day after calving is sacred to them These *singhs* have a widespread reputation among the villagers of northern India Those best known are the black, green, and grey *singhs*, but dead men have a way of becoming snakes, so their numbers multiply, and shrines must be erected to them If a peasant sees a snake he will salute it, and if it bites him he or his heirs will build a shrine to prevent similar occurrences in future

Among the conditions in which India differs from every other country in the world there is nothing more prominent and remarkable than the institution of caste The Hindu population of India is extraordinarily diverse but it has almost everywhere this common characteristic, that it is divided into castes, each of which is governed in all the relations of social life by its own customs The number of these castes is almost infinite Many of them may often be included under the same or a similar designation, but even the highest castes are constantly divided into sections, the members of which are separated by wide differences of custom, who cannot intermarry and cannot eat together without pollution The one

thing in which they all agree is in the reverence due to Brahmans

It is one of the delusions about modern India that although there have been many changes in the system of caste, it remains true that the Hindu population is divided into the four great classes described by Manu Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. In India itself this notion is often fostered by the more learned among the Brahmans, who love to make themselves and others believe in the continuous existence of a divinely constituted organisation. To what extent the religious and social systems shadowed forth in the ancient Brahmanical literature of India had an actual existence it is difficult to say, but it is certain that little remains of them now. The Brahmans, indeed, maintain their exceptional position.

The interesting but most difficult and complicated question of the origin of caste in India is one into which I cannot attempt, even in the most cursory manner, to enter. To the ordinary observer caste appears at the present time to mean for the most part hereditary occupation. India, in the words of Sir Henry Maine, is seen to be divided into a vast number of independent, self-acting, organised social groups—trading, manufacturing, cultivating—and in the majority of instances caste is only the name for a number of practices which are followed by each one of a multitude of groups of men. “As a rule, every trade, every profession, every guild, every tribe, every class, is also a caste, and the members of a caste not only have their special objects of worship, selected from the Hindu Pantheon, or adopted into it, but they exclusively eat together, and exclusively intermarry.” This, however, represents only a portion of the facts. Occupation is far from being necessarily a

sign of caste. There is no caste, not even the highest, that of Brahmans, members of which are not to be found in almost every occupation, provided only that it involves no personal or ceremonial pollution. Although very often an indication of caste, occupation cannot have been its origin. Sir Herbert Risley, whose work I have already quoted in speaking of the closely connected subject of religion, has thrown by his researches much new light upon this question. Starting with the well-established fact that although religion, language, and custom may give, in the words of Professor Flower, valuable indications, they are no true tests of race, and that these can only be found in physical characteristics, and observing that obvious and persistent physical differences can often be seen between the various castes of India, Sir Herbert Risley applied to the castes and tribes of Bengal, and of other provinces, those scientific methods of comparing and recording typical physical characteristics, which in other countries have added so greatly to ethnographic knowledge. Elaborate anthropometric investigations led him to the conclusion that the true origin of caste is to be found in race. His researches have shown that "the race sentiment of the Aryans, which runs through the whole course of Indian tradition, and survives in scarcely abated strength at the present day so far from being a figment of the intolerant pride of the Brahmans, rests upon a fact, which scientific methods confirm, that it has shaped the intricate groupings of the caste system, and has preserved the Aryan type in comparative purity in northern India"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Introduction, p. 1. To those who desire to study this difficult question of caste in India, Sir Herbert Risley's important work cannot be too strongly recommended. See also M. Émile Senart's *Les Castes dans l'Inde*, published in the *Annales du Musée Guimet Bibliothèque de Vulgarisation*. [A summary and criticism of M. Senart's theory of the origin of caste will be found in M. Joseph Chailley's *Administrative Problems of British India*, pp. 123-125.]



the women of his family might take exercise in the seclusion due to their caste

There has often been much misapprehension about the Indian Muhammadans, of whom there are more than 62,000,000. Among all the countries of India there are only two in which the Muhammadans are very numerous, and many of them are so ignorant of the religion to which they nominally belong, and so little devoted to its tenets, that they might almost as properly be counted among the innumerable classes of Hindus.

Throughout the long strip of country, for the most part scantily peopled, in the valley of the Indus, below the mountains of Afghanistan and Baluchistan, that form the western frontier of India, the great majority of the population has been for many centuries Muhammadan. This tract, varying in breadth to a maximum of about 400 miles, extends for some 800 miles, from beyond Peshawar on the north, through the plains of the western Punjab and Sind to the sea. Although within the geographical limits of India it is very distinct from any other Indian country. The dominant races of Pathans and Baluchis are of foreign origin, but the majority of the population consists of the descendants of Hindu or aboriginal tribes, who long ago accepted, more or less, the religion of their conquerors. The North-West Frontier province contained, according to the census of 1901, nearly 2,000,000 Muhammadans and only 134,000 Hindus.

In the eastern and richer and more populous parts of the Punjab, Muhammadans, real or nominal, descended mostly from converts from Hinduism, are also very numerous. There are altogether more than 12,000,000 Muhammadans in the Punjab and its

subordinate states, and they constitute about one  $\frac{1}{2}$  but of the whole population. More than 70 per cent of the people of Kashmir are Muhammadans.

Excepting these countries on the northern and western frontiers of India, the only great Indian province in which a very large proportion of the population has embraced Muhammadanism is Bengal. Out of a total population of 74,700,000 in the undivided province there were, in 1901, 25,250,000 Muhammadans and 46,700,000 Hindus. In the eastern districts of the delta of the Ganges, and beyond the Bráhmputra to the eastern limits of India—tracts which are now included in the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam—they constitute the great bulk of the agricultural population. Nothing is known historically of the time or manner in which this religious conversion occurred. But the conversion was in a great measure nominal rather than real.

Thus, out of a total Muhammadan population of 62,500,000, some 40,000,000, or nearly two-thirds of the whole number, are found on the western and eastern borders, and principally in the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, and the two Bengals. In the rest of India, containing about 232,000,000 people, there are only about 22,000,000 Muhammadans. The progress of the Muhammadan religion in India generally has therefore been smaller than might be supposed from the bare statement of the numbers that profess it and that progress will seem still smaller when the true character of a large section of Indian Muhammadanism is understood.

A large proportion of the Muhammadans of India hardly deserve that name. They differ little from their Hindu neighbours in their customs and ideas.

the ally far less Hinduised than that of the country seclages. In the Agra Province only 7 per cent of the Hindu population live in the towns, while 25 per cent of the Muhammadans are found there. In the agricultural districts about 10 per cent of the people are Muhammadan, but in the towns the Muhammadans constitute more than one-third of the inhabitants. This fact tends to make their political importance greater than it would otherwise be. In many of the towns much religious animosity prevails between Muhammadans and Hindus, and this often leads to serious and sanguinary affrays. Among the agricultural population the members of the several creeds usually live together more peaceably. This, however, is not always the case, nor does it by any means follow that Muhammadans who know little or nothing of the tenets of the religion they profess are on that account less fanatical in their hatred of Hindus. When a Muhammadan rises in the world he becomes more orthodox, and begins to assume foreign titles to respect. He calls himself Khán, or Shaikh, or even Saiyad, a descendant of the Prophet.

"In the Punjab," writes Mr Beames, "where the process of conversion has been carried out on a very large scale, there used to be a proverbial couplet to this effect, supposed to be spoken by a convert—

Last year I was a weaver, this year I am a Shaikh,  
Next year, if grain is dear, I shall be a Saiyad—

meaning that if he sold his crops well he should be wealthy enough to assume this latter title"<sup>1</sup>

The chief classes of Muhammadans claiming foreign descent are the Saiyad, Mughal, Pathán, and Shaikh

<sup>1</sup> Elliot's *Races of the North Western Provinces*, vol. 1 p. 185

Among these the Shaikhs are the most numerous, but the great majority of them are the descendants of Hindu converts. Politically, the Patháns of Afghán origin are the most important. During the Muhammadan dynasties, and especially while the empire was breaking up, they poured into India as adventurers and soldiers of fortune, ready to sell their swords to the highest bidder. Their unscrupulous violence and courage gave them great influence, and they were the only Muhammadan foreigners who permanently established themselves in the plains of India in large numbers. These were the people who, under their Indian name of Rohillas, fought against us in the time of Warren Hastings. The story of their cruel extermination has, I fear, become an accepted fact of history; but, as I have shown, it is purely fabulous.

Recollections of their old dominion, and the splendid monuments which testify to the magnificence of their former sovereigns, have exercised a powerful influence

whose knowledge entitled him to speak with unusual authority, thought that on an outside estimate we might assume them to be 5,000,000. Whatever be the actual number, it is comparatively small. It doubtless includes many who feel for us and our Government a deep and fanatical dislike, but it also includes a large number of men who deserve our confidence and respect. It is a mistake to suppose that the better classes of Muhammadans are as a rule disloyal. English education, which not unfrequently seems to develop and bring into prominence the least admirable qualities of the feebler races, often tends to make Muhammadans more manly and self-reliant, and more loyal citizens.

The fears that have sometimes been expressed that we may see in India a general outburst of Muhammadan fanaticism, and a simultaneous rising of millions of Muhammadans against our Government, are altogether groundless. If Muhammadanism contains any elements of political danger, they are nullified by the fact that the feelings of true Muhammadans towards idolatrous Hindus are more hostile than towards Christians, and that Hindus will never desire the restoration of Musalman supremacy. Nothing could be more opposed to the policy and universal practice of our Government in India than the old maxim of divide and rule, the maintenance of peace among all classes has always been recognised as one of the most essential duties of our "belligerent civilisation", but this need not blind us to the fact that the existence side by side of these hostile creeds is one of the strong points in our political position in India. The better classes of Muhammadans are a source to us of strength and not of weakness. They constitute a comparatively small but energetic minority of the population, whose political interests are identical

with ours, and who, under no conceivable circumstances, would prefer Hindu dominion to our own<sup>1</sup>

I have laid much stress on the fact that the majority of Indian Muhammadans differ in some respects little from Hindus, but there has undoubtedly been a growing tendency during the last half-century towards the purification of their faith. We must hope that with the increase of knowledge and civilisation this progress will continue, but it is not likely, within any time that we can foresee, to bring with it increased harmony of feeling between Muhammadans and Hindus. The more orthodox a Muhammadan becomes, the wider becomes the gulf that separates him from every form of idolatrous worship.

Although there is no danger to our Government from Muhammadan disaffection, the animosity which is so easily aroused between Muhammadans and Hindus is often a cause of serious anxiety. In past times it has frequently led to violent conflicts, and in late years it has shown itself with much virulence. Outbreaks of

<sup>1</sup> [One of the most difficult questions which arose in connection with the recent enlargement of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils and the extension of the representative principle was the representation of Muhammadans. They feared the possibility of their being outnumbered in the electorates and in the Councils by the Hindus, and reduced to an insignificant minority. They claimed to be represented as a separate class or community, and to be secured a more important position than would result from a strict application of the test of relative numbers. The manner in which this problem has been solved is described in Chapter IV. The Muhammadans have been formed into separate electorates for the purpose of returning a limited number of Muhammadan representatives. They also are eligible as electors in the ordinary electoral bodies. In the words employed by Lord Morley in replying to the representations of a Muhammadan deputation, there is in the new Councils an "adequate, real, and genuine Muhammadan representation." The anxiety which this question has given is due to the fact that "the difference between Muhammadanism and Hinduism is not a mere difference of articles of religious faith or dogma. It is a difference in life, in tradition, in history, in all the social things as well as articles of belief, that constitute a community." (speech of Lord Morley in the House of Lords on the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill, February 23, 1909)]

religious exasperation, attended with destructive rioting and bloodshed, have often occurred, in some instances they have assumed large proportions, nor have they been confined to the towns where the population is, as a rule, more disposed to be fanatical and turbulent. In 1893, for example, widespread disturbances of a most serious character, affecting a considerable tract of country and a large population, occurred in the district of Azimgarh, in the Agra Province. They were traced to the influence of cow-protecting societies which had, for some years, been carrying on their propaganda. In the same year, the great city of Bombay, containing more than 800,000 people, was for three days the scene of furious conflict. Eighty persons were killed and some hundred were wounded, and mosques and temples were desecrated and ruined. Order was not restored until a large force of troops, including British Cavalry and Infantry and Artillery, had been called out. In this, as in almost all similar cases elsewhere, the chronic hostility between Hindus and Muhammadans had been stimulated by the agitation against cow-killing. There was, the Bombay Government reported as the result of its inquiries, "an uneasy feeling among Muhammadans that they and their faith were suffering at the hands of the Hindus, that they were being gradually but surely edged out of the position they have hitherto held, and that their religion needed some special protection." This question of cow-killing has been a cause of frequent trouble throughout a great part of India, and while Hindu agitation has been primarily directed against Muhammadans, it has obviously a serious significance for ourselves. Indian statesmen ought not to forget that this is a subject—and it is almost the only one that exists—which forms a bond of union

among the 230 millions of the countless castes and classes of Hindus throughout the whole continent of India, on which they all hold the same belief and have the same sympathies

In some parts of India, and especially in the two Bengals, there has been a large increase of Muhammadanism during the last thirty years. In 1872 in the undivided province the Hindus outnumbered the Muhammadans by half a million, in 1901, these proportions were reversed, the Muhammadans being more numerous by half a million than the Hindus. On this subject Mr O'Donnell, who superintended the census of 1891 in Bengal, wrote as follows —“It is known that a powerful Muhammadan propaganda is at work, and that the preaching of the ubiquitous mullahs and mirs is directed not only to instil the precepts of a higher life, according to the doctrines of the Kurán, on Musalmans, but to gain over followers for its teachings. That converts should result seems natural, but however this may be, it is certain that the great growth of the Muhammadan population in Bengal proper is connected with physical rather than doctrinal forces. The Musalman with his more varied and nutritious dietary is probably a more vigorous man than the Hindu. Moreover, the universal practice of widow marriage, which the Bengali Hindu holds in abhorrence, adds very largely to the reproductive class amongst Muhammadan women. On the other hand, ill-assorted marriages are far more common amongst Hindus, men well advanced in years being united to girl-wives, who in the natural course of human life are left widows, debarred from further maternity, at a comparatively early age”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [The correctness of this explanation of the more rapid growth of the Muhammadan population as compared with the Hindu population is accepted by the compilers of the Census Report of 1901. See vol. 1. page 386. In every province



Nearly all of the 9,500,000 Buddhists of the census are found in Burma. Buddhism no longer exists as one of the religions of the peoples of the Indian continent. Even in Burma, Mr. Baines writes, "the popular belief is little but Animism, and the attachment to the higher creed is largely due to the educational influence of the religious orders, because every boy has to be sent, if only for a short period, to one of the monasteries as a novice or lay brother. Like the neo-Brahmanism, too, it is gradually absorbing within its sphere the forest tribes who are professedly Animistic in their belief, and like its former rival, it places no embargo on their tutelary gods, whilst through the monastic system it tends to raise them in the social scale. Considerably more than half the males in Burma can read and write, a feature in which the difference between the two systems is very clearly denoted."

Out of 2,900,000 Christians, in 1901, in British India and the native States, 170,000 were Europeans, of whom a little more than one half were in or connected with the army. The other half included the civil employées of the Government and their families, the railway servants, and the whole of the non-official European community. There were about 89,000 Eurasians. The Christians of Indian origin numbered 2,660,000. Of these nearly two millions are found in Madras and in the native states of Malabar, the great majority of them belonging to the Church of Rome, descendants of the converts made in the sixteenth century by St. Francis Xavier and by his followers. The native members of the various Protestant sects throughout India numbered 970,000, those of the Roman Catholic Church 1,123,000, and those of the

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the Muhammadan population increased more rapidly than the Hindu in the decade 1892-1901. Muhammadans increased in India by 8.9 per cent, whereas the population at large increased by only 2.4 per cent.]

Syrian Church 571,000 These figures are exclusive of the French and Portuguese possessions, where the Christian population is almost entirely Roman Catholic. The total increase of the Christian population in the ten years between 1891 and 1901 in British India and the native states, was about 639,000. The number of native members of the Roman and Syrian Churches increased by 250,000, and that of the various Protestant sects by 378,000. The greater part of the increase was in southern India, but there was no province in which the number of Christians was not larger in 1901 than ten years before. Although the Christians in India constitute only one per cent of the whole population, these figures are remarkable.

Judged by even a low standard, the religion of the great majority of the native Christians, especially those of southern India, is Christianity in little more than name. There are many noble exceptions, but it cannot be professed that Indian Christians have gained for themselves, as a rule, an exceptional measure of respect either among their own countrymen or among Europeans. There has been no apparent connection between the increase in the number of Christians and the progress of education. The effect of higher English education on the religious beliefs of educated Hindus has doubtless been very great, but it has had little tendency to make them Christian. Converts from Muhammadanism to Christianity are very few. The large majority of converts are drawn from the lowest castes of Hindus and from the Animistic tribes, and this goes far to explain the fact, stated in the Report on the Census of 1901 in the United Provinces, that "to the great mass of converts the change in religion causes little change in outward relations. it was reported from one district

that families had been converted without the rest of the villagers knowing it. What change is made is on the whole for the better."

The only other Indian religions that need be noticed are those of the Jains and the Sikhs. Jainism is, in its doctrines, very similar to the more orthodox forms of Buddhism. But it rejects the doctrine of *Nirvāṇa*, and believes that when the soul has been delivered from the trammels of successive existences it begins a spiritual life. The Jains worship the saints who had attained this spiritual life. The Jains in many parts of India are anxious to be regarded as a Hindu sect and not as a separate religious body. In the north and west of India the Jains are still a cultivated class, mostly engaged in commerce, whilst in the south they are, as a rule, agriculturists.

The Sikhs are politically important, but in matters of religion there is no great difference between them and Hindus. "In the present day," writes Mr Baines, "peace has relaxed the bonds of discipline, and the distinction between Sikhs and the rest of the Brahmanic community is mainly ritualistic. For example, it was found by experience that at the census, the only trustworthy method of distinguishing this creed was to ask if the person in question repudiated the services of the barber and the tobacconist, for the precepts most strictly enforced nowadays are that the hair of the head and face must never be cut, and that smoking is a habit to be absolutely avoided."<sup>1</sup>

The Parsis form a very small but highly respectable community, devoted for the most part to mercantile pursuits. Their enterprise as traders, and their freedom from prejudices of caste, take them into all parts

<sup>1</sup> *General Report on the Census of India, 1891*, p. 164

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of India, but the great majority of them are found in Bombay. They have gained for themselves by their character, their superior education, and their wealth, a somewhat exceptional position, but they have so little in common with anything Indian, and their numbers are so small, that they can only be mentioned as an interesting group of foreigners, who for many centuries have retained their ancient creed, and have kept themselves apart from the people of all Indian countries.

tween the two provinces, the whole, excepting the districts bordering on the tableland of Central India, and the Himálayan districts of Kumáon and Garhwál, forming one continuous alluvial plain, broken only by the rivers which intersect it, but politically, they have been, until some years ago, under separate administrations. Oudh became British territory in 1856, it was partially amalgamated with the North-Western Provinces in 1877. Although there are still many differences in the revenue and judicial systems of the two provinces, they are now virtually a single province under a Lieutenant-Governor, whose headquarters are at Allahabad. In 1901, in consequence of the formation of the North-West Frontier province, and to avoid confusion from the similarity of names, the North-Western Provinces became the province of Agra, and, with Oudh, they are now known as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. They cover 112,000 square miles, with a population of 48,500,000. Their area is not much smaller, and their population is much larger than that of Great Britain and Ireland. There are no countries in Europe, excepting Belgium and England, in which the population is so dense. No other Indian province, with the exception of Bengal, is so thickly peopled.

It must be remembered, however, that comparisons between the density of population in India and in countries like England are apt to be very misleading, unless we bear in mind the great differences that exist in the distribution of the people. In England more than half of the whole population is congregated in large towns, while in India the corresponding population is extremely small. According to the census of 1901, the total urban population of India was only

29,200,000 out of a total of 294,300,000, or about ten per cent of the whole <sup>1</sup>

Throughout the United Provinces, although there are many and great differences of dialect, the general language of the people is, in one form or another, Hindi. The mixed language called Urdu, or Hindustani, which has become a *lingua franca*, very generally understood, especially by Muhammadans, throughout a great part of India, grew up in the northern provinces in the time of the Muhammadan sovereigns. Its grammar is mainly Hindi, while in its vocabulary there is a large admixture of Persian and Arabic, the languages of the Musalman invaders. Urdu is the literary and official language of the United Provinces, it is commonly spoken in the towns and by the upper and more educated classes.

This has been for ages the most famous part of India. In prehistoric times it was the central or middle land, the *madhya-desha* of the sacred books of the Hindus and of the ancient poets, the abode of the solar and lunar races, and of the gods and heroes of the *Máhábhárata* and *Rámáyana*. To say nothing of the more or less mythical cities of which little but the names remain, this tract contains the most holy places of India—Benares, Ajodhya, Kanauj, Muttra, and many

<sup>1</sup> It may usefully be borne in mind that people generally are too much in the habit of assuming that average or mean results have necessarily a real signification, and represent facts. Very often this is far from being the case. An average or mean is strictly an abstract arithmetical idea, and in that sense every such mean, properly calculated, is correct, but when this abstract idea is applied to facts, it may often have no useful meaning whatever. Thus, if we had before us a hundred objects, one of which was 1001 feet high, while the remaining ninety nine were each 1 foot high, we should say correctly, in one sense, that the average height of the whole was 11 feet. But, in fact, the height of none of the objects would be at all near to 11 feet, the arithmetical idea would have no useful significance, but would confuse and lead us wrong. This is constantly true in dealing with statistics of population, and a multitude of other matters.

And famous cities. If, judging by a European standard, the traveller sees few signs of wealth, he sees few of extreme poverty. Nearly the whole of the agricultural population is collected in villages, between which stretch the wide unbroken fields. There are few of those scattered homesteads which are so often seen in Europe. This feature of rural life, a consequence of the universal insecurity which until the last century had prevailed from time immemorial, is common throughout India.

In 1901, out of 48,500,000 people in the United Provinces, 41,300,000 were Hindu and nearly 7,000,000 were Muhammadan.

As everywhere else in India, the mass of the population is agricultural, and the number of non-agriculturists is smaller than would be supposed from the figures of the census. A large proportion of the people returned as engaged in trades and employments are village servants and village shopkeepers who belong in fact to the agricultural community. It is probable that 90 per cent of the whole population are so closely connected with the land that they may properly be called agricultural.

There is, however, no part of India in which large cities and towns are so numerous. In the Agra province, Benares has 209,000 inhabitants; Cawnpore, 197,000, Agra, 188,000, Allahabad, 172,000, Meerut, 118,000, and eight other towns have populations of from 50,000 to 100,000. Oudh is more entirely agricultural. It has only two large towns. Lucknow with 264,000, and Fyzabad with 75,000 inhabitants. Trade is active. The exports consist almost entirely of agricultural produce, wheat and other food-grains, ghee, oil-seeds, sugar, and (but this is the product of a dying industry) indigo, the imports are chiefly European manufactured

articles, cotton-goods, metals, drugs, petroleum, and salt Manufactures of general commercial importance there are none, excepting in some instances, as at Cawnpoor, in which they have been established by Europeans, but large numbers of people throughout the country are employed in domestic handicrafts The coarser cotton cloths which form the ordinary clothing of the poorer classes are chiefly of home manufacture Some of the textile fabrics, as the *kinkhábs*, or gold brocades and embroideries of Benares and of Agra, are costly and beautiful

I cannot speak at any length of the splendid works of architectural and decorative art which are found in these provinces They are unequalled in India, and are not surpassed in any country in the world Except in Athens, nothing has ever been built more beautiful than the *Táj*, erected at Agra by Shah Jehan as a mausoleum for his wife, and in which he himself is buried.

"Perhaps in the whole world," says Mr Fergusson, "there is not a scene where nature and art so successfully combine to produce a perfect work of art as within the precincts of this far-famed mausoleum No words can express the chastened beauty of that central chamber, seen in the soft gloom of the subdued light that reaches it through the distant and half-closed openings that surround it Used as a *barah durrie*, or pleasure-place, it must always have been the coolest and the loveliest of garden retreats; and now that it is sacred to the dead it is the most graceful and the most impressive of the sepulchres of the world."

I doubt whether any European palace can show anything equal in beauty to the audience-halls of the Mughal emperors in their capitals of Delhi and Agra No portals approach in magnificence those of Fatehpur Sikri and Delhi The tower of Giotto at Florence is

<sup>1</sup> Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, pp. 575, 584



another crop of much importance, in no other part of India is it so valuable as in these provinces, it may be classed among the hot-weather crops, since it remains on the ground nearly throughout the year, and its growth mainly depends on the heat and moisture of the summer. Some of the pulses, maize, and cotton are also largely cultivated at this season of the year. In parts of the provinces indigo is still an important crop, but as I have already noticed, the future of this product has become very doubtful.

The rains are over in northern India towards the end of September, and in the following month the autumn crops are for the most part cut.

In October and November, when the excessive heat and moisture have passed away and the cold season has begun, the soil and climate become suitable for the agricultural products of temperate latitudes, and the winter crops, known under the general name of *rabi*, are sown. Between November and March it would be difficult to find a more delightful climate for Englishmen than that of northern India. The nights and mornings are cold and even at times frosty, and the days pleasantly warm. After Christmas there is almost always a short season of moderate rain, which is of much importance to the growing spring crops.

The chief agricultural staples of northern India at this period of the year are wheat and barley. They occupy nearly 60 per cent of the whole food-producing area in the United Provinces. Wheat from northern India has been, in some years, an important source of supply to England, and, as the means of communication are extended and cheapened, it is becoming of increasing importance. To what extent in the future Indian wheat will compete in the English market with

wheat from the United States and Canada depends on many conditions, but India unquestionably can, under favourable conditions of price, provide a very large supply, and the supply is increasing with the rapid development of the great irrigation undertakings of northern India. Wheat in the Punjab is a still more important crop than in the United Provinces. It is also extensively grown in parts of Central India, Bombay, and the northern Deccan, and in those countries, as well as in northern India, it forms the chief article of food among the richer classes. Bailey is largely consumed by those who cannot afford to eat wheat. Various kinds of pulses, tobacco, opium, linseed, and mustard are widely cultivated at this season. Oil-seeds are one of the chief articles of export from India to Europe. The principal winter crops are harvested in March and April.

Although, as furnishing the chief means of subsistence to the mass of the population, the first importance must be assigned in this part of India to the summer crops, which are dependent on the periodical rains, the more valuable products, on which the people have mainly to rely for increase of wealth and prosperity, and for the means of paying their revenue and rent, are those grown in the winter. Even in favourable seasons artificial irrigation is necessary for their successful cultivation. The rental of irrigated land in northern India is usually double that of land dependent on the season alone.

I have already given some account of the magnificent irrigation canals constructed by the British Government, surpassing in magnitude and usefulness all other works of the kind in the world, and I have especially noticed those of the United Provinces<sup>1</sup>. In northern India it is for the crops of the cold season that they are especially

<sup>1</sup> Chapter XIV

proprietors, cultivating their own land wholly or in part, and associated together in village communities

“These communities are represented by an elected or hereditary head, and are jointly responsible for the payment of the Government revenue due from the entire village. Sometimes all the land is held in common, and the proceeds are thrown together and divided among the sharers by village custom. Sometimes the proprietors all have their separate holdings in the estate, each paying the quota of revenue due from his plot, and enjoying the surplus profits of it”<sup>1</sup> Although I speak of village communities, it must be understood that communities of the ancient type, interesting descriptions of which have been given by Sir Henry Maine and others, can hardly or never be found at the present time

It has been already explained that the share of the rental to which the state, as chief proprietor of the land, is held to be entitled, was formerly much larger than it is now. At the beginning of the last century, in what is now the Agra province, it was 90 per cent, it was afterwards 66 per cent, and since 1854 it has been nominally 50 per cent. This is considered equivalent to about 7/8 of the gross produce. The amount actually taken by the Government is almost always less.

The manner in which the Government revenue, assessed on the village as a whole, is to be distributed among the shareholders is usually settled by themselves. Any proprietor may demand the separation of his property from the rest of the village, but so long as the village estate remains undivided, the ultimate responsibility for the payment of the Government revenue rests jointly on the whole community. The present tendency, as Mr Baden Powell says, “is to divide, and

<sup>1</sup> *Report of Indian Famine Commission of 1880, Part II* p. 110

for each man to bear his own burdens, and take the benefit of his own industry and exertion. The advantages of the system of union and exclusion of strangers were more felt in times of war and trouble, when defence against a raid had to be continually prepared for, and when common exertion was necessary to bear up against a heavy assessment, than they are now. The happy pictures of self-governing communities, careless of the world outside, that our books draw are more visionary than real"<sup>1</sup> In the Punjab the village proprietors themselves cultivate the greater part of the land. In the United Provinces a larger proportion of it is cultivated through tenants paying rent. It is a consequence of this fact that the average standard of comfort among the agricultural classes is lower than in the Punjab.

Whatever be the tenure of land, the system of agriculture throughout India is one of *petite culture*. In the words of Sir Edward Buck, we may consider that almost the whole country is split up into millions of five-acre farms. The holders of these farms are small proprietors or tenants, either paying revenue directly to the state or rent to an intermediate landlord.

Tenants, technically so called, but who, it must be remembered, hold a very different position from tenants in England, are almost everywhere divided into two classes. A large proportion of them possess, according to immemorial custom, a right of permanent and hereditary occupancy in the land so long as they pay the rent that is due. The amount of their rent mainly depends on local custom, not on competition. In some cases they are entitled to hold at permanently fixed rates, and their right is heritable and transferable. In

<sup>1</sup> *Land Systems of British India*, vol. II p. 153

kánungos There is in each district a staff of these officers, whose duty it is to supervise and check the field work of the patwáris, to test their annual entries, and verify changes recorded by them. There are nearly 1200 kánungos of various grades in these provinces. In every district there is a special training school, through which the patwáris are required to pass and qualify according to prescribed standards."

These measures for ensuring the accuracy of the village records have also led to very important improvements in the system under which settlements are periodically revised.

The policy of fixing for all time the demand of the State upon the land has been—we may trust, finally—abandoned. We have had sufficient evidence of the folly of such a policy in the consequences to which, after more than a century's trial, it has led us in Bengal. It has nevertheless always been felt that there were serious evils connected with the system under which settlements were made in northern India for a term of years. Whatever care was taken, operations of survey and inquiry and record could not be carried on continuously for long periods of time without harassment of the agricultural classes, and without causing uneasiness and discontent. When the term of the settlement approached its close, not only was a check placed on improvements, but positive deterioration was to be feared, because the people were apprehensive that signs of prosperity might lead to enhancement of the Government revenue.

The necessity for elaborate local investigations ceases when the village records are accurately maintained, and in a great part of the United Provinces these are now so trustworthy that when a new settlement is necessary they can be used as a sufficient basis for the revision of the assessment.

An official paper gives the following account of the system under which settlements are now made —

“These most valuable and successful reforms, carried out under the direction of the department of land records and agriculture, which have laid the foundations of all the recent improvements in the revision of land assessment, were originally devised and inaugurated by Sir Edward Buck. In the districts about to be brought under settlement, the annual correction of the village maps has made them so nearly accurate as to render a fresh survey unnecessary, and the rent-rolls compiled by the *patwāris*, under the supervision of the *kánungos*, are sufficiently correct to serve as the basis of assessment. For the costly and troublesome temporary establishments which used to be employed has been substituted this ordinary and permanent agency, and the results have been, that proceedings which would have lasted at least ten years under the old system will now be carried out in three years, and probably at less than a quarter of the expense. The first duty of the settlement officer is to verify the rent-roll drawn up by the village accountant, and unless he has grounds for believing that the rents are fraudulently understated, or that for any other reason they are very much below the rents paid in similar circumstances in the same neighbourhood, he accepts them as the basis of his assessment, and fixes the Government revenue at half the rental. He is forbidden to take prospective assets into account, and in every case the assessment will rest on the ground of actuals. In assessing land cultivated by the proprietors themselves, for which no true rent is paid, he applies a rate which is 25 per cent lower than the rent paid by tenants in the same village.”

Where increased value has been given to the land by wells or other permanent improvements made at the expense of the owner or occupier, no enhancement of the Government demand on account of such increase can be made until at least the owner or occupier has fully recouped himself for his outlay.

This is a rule which was altogether unknown under any of the governments that preceded us. In Bombay

improvements that have followed the creation of separate departments for the control of this branch of the administration I must return for a moment to this subject

Lord Mayo was the first Governor-General who gave practical recognition to the value of the study of questions connected with Indian agriculture

"For generations to come," the Government of India wrote in 1870 to the Secretary of State, "the progress of India in wealth and civilisation must be directly dependent on her progress in agriculture. Agricultural products must long continue the most important part of the exports, and the future development of Indian commerce will mainly depend upon the improvement in the quantity and quality of existing agricultural staples, or on the introduction of new products, which shall serve as materials for manufacture and for use in the industrial arts. There is perhaps no country in the world in which the state has so immediate and direct an interest in such questions. The Government of India is not only a government but the chief landlord. The land revenue is derived from that portion of the rent which belongs to the state and not to individual proprietors. Throughout the greater part of India, every measure for the improvement of the land enhances the value of the property of the state. The duties which in England are performed by a good landlord fall, in India, in a great measure, upon the government. Speaking generally, the only Indian landlord who can command the requisite knowledge is the state."

In 1870, a separate department of Agriculture and Commerce was created under the Government of India.

It was foreseen by Lord Mayo that this central department of control would be able to do comparatively little until working departments with similar objects had been established under the local Governments. In 1875, when I was myself Lieutenant-Governor, the first provincial department of land records and agriculture was created in the present Agra province. The honour for the successful initiation and subsequent progress of

this excellent reform is mainly due to the enlightened and untiring energy of Sir Edward Buck. Similar departments were subsequently established in the other provinces of British India. At first their attention was chiefly directed to the improvement of the land revenue administration, the better organisation of the system of maintaining accurate land records, and the reform of the methods under which the land revenue was assessed. It was felt that the most urgent necessity was to obtain accurate information about all matters affecting the condition of the cultivator, and to adjust the land revenue system to his requirements. Experiment and research with the object of improving Indian agriculture were for the time subordinated to the land-record work of the departments. But they were not lost sight of, and under the government of Lord Curzon steps were taken to separate land records from agriculture, and to create in each province a proper department of agriculture, with a sufficient staff of experts and an agricultural college. To give unity to the whole scheme an Inspector-General of Agriculture was attached to the Government of India, and a central college of agriculture and experimental station for the general benefit of all provinces was established.

India now possesses properly equipped departments of agriculture, and scientific assistance has at length been given to its greatest industry. The necessity for this was seen by the Famine Commission of 1880, and was again urged by Sir Antony MacDonnell's Famine Commission of 1901. The following passage from the report of the latter contains in principle the policy which the Government of India have since carried out — "Much progress has been made in the last twenty years, but the progress has been unequal,



both cases. The name 'collector' conveys to English ears a very false idea. A collector in England is a petty officer who collects rates and taxes, in India, he is, in many respects, the most important officer in the whole administrative hierarchy.

I borrow from Sir William Hunter the following description —

"The district officer, whether known as collector-magistrate or as deputy commissioner, is the responsible head of his jurisdiction. Upon his energy and personal character depends ultimately the efficiency of our Indian Government. His own special duties are so numerous and so various as to bewilder the outsider, and the work of his subordinates, European and native, largely depends upon the stimulus of his personal example. His position has been compared to that of the French *préfet*, but such a comparison is unjust in many ways to the Indian district officer. He is not a mere subordinate of a central bureau, who takes his colour from his chief and represents the political parties or the permanent officialism of the capital. The Indian collector is a strongly individualised worker in every department of rural well being, with a large measure of local independence and of individual initiative. As the name of collector-magistrate implies, his main functions are twofold. He is a fiscal officer, charged with the collection of the revenue from the land and other sources, he is also a revenue and criminal judge, both of first instance and in appeal. But his title by no means exhausts his multifarious duties. He does in his smaller local sphere all that the Home Secretary superintends in England, and a great deal more, for he is the representative of a paternal and not of a constitutional Government. Police, jails, education, municipalities, roads, sanitation, dispensaries, the local taxation, and the imperial revenues of his district are to him matters of daily concern. He is expected to make himself acquainted with every phase of the social life of the natives, and with each natural aspect of the country. He should be a lawyer, an accountant, a financier, and a ready writer of state papers. He ought also to possess no mean knowledge of agriculture, political economy, and engineering."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Empire*, p. 513

All this signifies, not that he is expected to be omniscient, but that the collector-magistrate is the principal officer of Government in every branch of the executive administration of the district. As the local representative of the Government, through whom all the orders and measures of the ruling power are issued and made known to the people, and on whom the Government depends for information of every serious matter that occurs, he holds a position of great and exceptional importance. If the district officer is weak and incapable, authority and law in the district are weak also, if he is strong and competent, they are respected. Every cause which tends needlessly to diminish his influence lessens the authority of the Government. At the same time, it must not be supposed that he has any irresponsible and arbitrary power: all his more important duties are strictly regulated either by law or by rules laid down by the Government, and all his proceedings are subject to supervision and, when necessary, to correction.

His duties as collector differ in different provinces, according to the system on which the land revenue is assessed, the prevailing tenures of land, and other local circumstances. Thus, in Bengal, where the Government demand has been fixed in perpetuity, and where comparatively few measures have been taken to maintain accurate records of existing rights in the land, the duties of the collector are less important and difficult than in the temporarily settled provinces.

In northern India the district officer, as Mr Thomason wrote, "in order properly to discharge his duties, must possess the most complete knowledge of the landed tenures in his district, and of everything which tends to affect the interests of the agricultural

order to prevent the police, which is designed for the protection of the people, from becoming a means of petty oppression. The code of criminal procedure is full of provisions intended to guard against this and at the same time to make the police efficient for their purpose"<sup>1</sup> Although, compared with the state of things which formerly prevailed, the progress has been great, it is still true that steadily to maintain an honest and efficient police is one of the standing difficulties of our administration, and that there is still very much room for improvement.<sup>2</sup>

Every district has its gaol, and there are central prisons in convenient situations. Although not in all respects managed on the system adopted in England, there are few countries in Europe where the gaols are so well looked after. A great Indian prison is a model of cleanliness and good management. Every district has also its engineer establishments for the construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, and other public works and buildings, its telegraph and post offices, its schools and hospitals. In 1909 there were 546 hospitals and dispensaries in the United Provinces, and some 5,611,000 patients were treated in them. I have already referred to these institutions, and to the great skill of many of the native surgeons. They are highly valued by the people, and for the most part are supported from local funds or by voluntary local subscriptions, the Govern-

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Criminal Law of England*, vol. iii p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> [See note at the end of this chapter on the report of the Indian Police Commission of 1902. The Commission found that the police force throughout the country was in an unsatisfactory condition, and that extensive reforms, involving a large increase in expenditure, were urgently required. The Government of India, while considering that the picture drawn by the Commission was exaggerated and unfair to the Indian police force as a whole, concurred as to the necessity for reform, accepted the main proposals of the report, and have provided the necessary funds—about one million sterling a year—for carrying them out.]

ment supplying the native doctor and European medicines. There were also, in 1909, fifty-six separate hospitals for the exclusive use of women. These belonged, for the most part, to the admirable institution founded, when she was in India, by the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, of which some account has been given in a previous chapter,<sup>1</sup> and which has rendered invaluable service to the women of India. Each district has a principal medical officer, called the civil surgeon, who supervises all the medical establishments, and is the health-officer of the district.

I wish that I could give a satisfactory account of the progress of sanitary improvement, but the prejudices and ignorance of the people make even simple reforms difficult. There are not many parts of India which are not liable to frequent epidemics of cholera, and in late years bubonic plague, which, except in the remote Himálayan districts, had long been almost unknown, has become lamentably destructive. Much, however, has been done to improve the sanitary condition of the larger towns, and in many cases important works for water supply and drainage have been constructed. There is another respect in which much progress has been made. Smallpox has always been extremely fatal in northern India, but the prejudices and suspicions of the people have gradually been giving way, and vaccination has been extended with increasing success. In the Himálayan districts of the Agra province, in particular, smallpox, which formerly sometimes decimated the population, has been almost extirpated. A staff of vaccinators is maintained by the Government in every district of the United Provinces, and in 1909 more than 1,456,000 persons

the wrongful exercise by the Lieutenant-Governor of arbitrary power, are, however, complete. There is no branch of the administration in which he is not bound either by positive law, or by the standing orders of the supreme Government, or by the system which has gradually grown up under his predecessors. Any great changes which he may desire to introduce must first receive the approval of the Governor-General in Council. He can impose no new taxation, his powers of sanctioning fresh expenditure, although large, are carefully restricted, and he has no control over the military forces.

Until 1887 the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces had no council for legislative purposes, and all laws required for the North-Western provinces and Oudh were passed in the Council of the Governor-General. The Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces has now a legislative council similar to those in Madras, Bombay, and Bengal, the constitution of which was described in a former chapter.<sup>1</sup>

Under the Indian Councils Act of 1909, the number of members must not exceed forty-eight, and the regulations made under the Act provide that not more than twenty-two of these may be officials. Of the remaining twenty-six members the head of the province nominates six, and twenty are elected by different constituencies. The larger municipalities elect four members, district boards and the smaller municipalities eight, the Muhammadan community four, the landholders of the provinces two, and the Allahabad University and the Cawnpore Chamber of Commerce one each.

There are other departments of the administration

<sup>1</sup> Chapter IV

which, as before explained, are under the control of the supreme and not of the provincial Government, because they deal with matters of imperial interest, common to the whole of India; among these are the post office and telegraph, the survey, the public accounts and currency

Before leaving this part of my subject I must repeat that no one can understand how the actual government of India is carried on until he has obtained a proper appreciation of the facts which are stated in the earlier part of this chapter. The unit of administration in every province of British India is the district, every district has its own organisation, the province is a collection of districts, with the addition of the strong central authority of the provincial Government which controls and gives unity to the whole, the machinery by which this central authority is exercised is efficient and complete, nothing of public importance can occur in any district or in any village, information regarding which is not immediately laid before the Government of the province

I have hitherto referred to the executive administration only. The courts of justice, as in other countries possessing civilised systems of government, are independent of the executive power, the Government, like its subjects, is amenable to the law, and, like them, may be sued in the courts

A general account has already been given of the system under which the administration of justice in India is carried on<sup>1</sup>. In the United Provinces each district is under the jurisdiction of a civil judge, who also presides over the court of session

The district is divided into a convenient number

## CHAPTER XXI

### AN INDIAN PROVINCE (*continued*)

Condition of the people—Increasing wealth and prosperity—Indebtedness of the agricultural classes—Increase of population—Emigration—Character of the people—Their great honesty—Cruel customs—Crime—Infanticide—Criminal Tribes

REFERENCE will be made hereafter to some of the results of the elaborate system of government which I have been describing. Something must now be said regarding the material condition of the people.

It is easy in almost every country to find examples of extreme poverty, and it is easy in India. The day labourer is often little better than an hereditary bondsman, and in bad seasons his condition may be miserable. It would be hard to discover people living in a worse state of moral and physical degradation than that of the lowest classes of Muhammadans in many of the towns of northern India. It is easy for the Indian pessimist to take cases of this kind, which are not rare, and then, by a bold generalisation, to assume that extreme poverty and misery are the normal condition of the agricultural population throughout India. We might as reasonably, on evidence of the condition of the poorest classes in the west of Ireland, or in the worst slums of the great cities of England, conclude that the rural and town population of our own country are universally wretched and degraded.

I have laid much stress on the progress of India in material prosperity, but that India is a poor country is a fact which no one could think of denying, and so it will inevitably remain while the country is almost purely agricultural. In the words of an eminent economist, it has been proved by experience, everywhere and at all times, that a purely agricultural country is never rich, even from an agricultural point of view. Where other industries and commerce also flourish, it is through their means that agricultural wealth is developed.<sup>1</sup> But it by no means follows that because an agricultural country is not rich its people are miserable.

Referring to northern India, I have already said that there is perhaps no country in which more complete and trustworthy information has been placed on record in regard to every subject affecting the agricultural population.

The great majority of Indian agriculturists have the advantage of possessing, either as peasant proprietors or



industrious cultivators are dependent upon the uncertain rains of heaven I should like then to tell the people of that district what they tell us, and to ask them whether they agree There are men there who have heard from their fathers, or perhaps I should now say from their grandfathers, and who would tell them, as they were never tired of telling me, of the state of affairs which preceded our advent I will not weary the council by any attempt to describe that state of affairs in detail Suffice it to say that in the early years of the last century, when we took over the district, the royal canal had long dried up, that more than four-fifths of the area was over-run by thick forest, which afforded shelter to thieves, vagabonds, and beasts of prey, and its inhabitants either removed or exterminated, and that out of 221 villages in a single *pargana*, the people of no fewer than 178 had been wholly driven from their homes and fields

"I believe the history of our early administration of that district to be typical It would have been impossible to 'impoverish' what had already been laid desolate But at first we made many and grievous blunders We misunderstood the local tenures, our assessments, founded upon the rates which we inherited from our predecessors, were oppressive, and our police and criminal administration was stern and rude, though perhaps not more so than the unsettled state of the district demanded But the mistakes did not long remain undiscovered or unrectified The country gradually settled down in the early 'thirties, a rough survey afforded a basis for a more reasonable revenue system, and from that time to the present, or at any rate up to 1892 when I last saw it, the history of the district has been one of continuous advance in prosperity In 1871, when I first went there, its condition was that of an ordinary fairly prosperous British district, though it included tracts which had suffered from the too prodigal use of canal water When I revisited it in 1892 the change for the better that had taken place in the interval was marvellous. The canal had been re-aligned at great expense so as to extend and improve irrigation, the supply of water had been rigorously limited to what was needed, rather than to what was asked for, the swamps had been drained, so that I found waving sheets of wheat where I had been accustomed to shoot snipe, the saline efflorescence which had thrown hundreds of acres out of cultivation was slowly but steadily disappearing, villages which I had

been obliged to assess with extraordinary leniency on account of their water-logged and depressed condition had become prosperous, and their people were no longer unable to marry their daughters because they were barren with malaria, new branches of the canal had been carried through arid tracts of which the produce had been notoriously insecure, and a railway had been constructed right through the heart of the district. I either marched through or saw people, not merely from the canal tract, but every part of the district, including the driest and the most precarious. They had their grumbles and their grievances, without which no properly constituted husbandman is complete, but their general story was one of increasing contentment and prosperity, nor was outward evidence lacking. It was impossible to ride across the old familiar fields and through the well known villages without realising the progress that had been made. To mention three small but significant facts: brick houses, which had formerly been confined to the *sáhukar* of the village, had become much more common, small factories for ginning and baling cotton had sprung up all through the cotton-producing tract, and when I wished to show my daughters one of the picturesque old-fashioned cane-presses to which I had been accustomed, I was told that, except in two villages, they had been superseded throughout the district by the iron mill invented by Mr Milne of Behea. I know this, that if any one were to tell these people whom I know so well that their history under British rule has been one of continuous deterioration and impoverishment, they would simply laugh in his face. I have chosen to speak of this particular district, because I have known it as I have never known any other, and because I visited it again after an interval of fifteen years. But I have served in many other districts of the Punjab, and from all that I have seen and heard, I believe that what I have said of this district is in the main true of all."

There can be no question that the story which Sir Denzil Ibbetson has told us of the Punjab is equally true of other provinces of British India.

In a previous chapter<sup>1</sup> I showed the progress of the commerce of India—progress which it is not

<sup>1</sup> Chapter XIII.

No people are more charitable. It is true that the Indian idea of charity is often very different from ours, and it is affected so strongly by caste considerations that it sometimes seems to us to pass into cruelty. But there is hardly any class that is not, according to its means and according to its own ideas, kind-hearted and benevolent. Nothing is more remarkable in times of scarcity than native charity, although it is often too indiscriminate to be wise. The people generally are extremely industrious. Although uneducated and superstitious, the agricultural classes are certainly not inferior in intelligence to the peasants of many of the countries of Europe.

All classes are polite but not servile in their manners, it would be impossible to surpass the finished courtesy of a Muhammadan gentleman.

I must leave this part of my subject. I spent in northern India the best and most interesting portion of my life. It is impossible to live among its people without feeling for them a deep regard, and, assuming that our dominion does not perish before the proper time has come, I cannot doubt that their future will be fortunate.

I have been describing a peaceful, contented, and well-disposed society, deserving in a high degree the respect and affection of its rulers, but it must not be forgotten that we shall have a very incomplete idea of India if we look only at what we see upon the surface. The more we learn about India the more we become alive to the fact that we are, to use Sir James Stephen's expression, the representatives of a belligerent civilisation, which has to wage constant warfare against strange barbarisms, horrid customs, and cruel superstitions, ancient survivals, ready at any moment to start into activity.

If we look at the criminal statistics of northern India, which are as carefully collected as in any country of Europe, it will appear that there is less crime than in England, and that the people are astonishingly peaceable and honest. The conclusion will be true; but if we inquire more deeply we shall find strange facts that these statistics do not show. We shall find, for instance, that in the United Provinces there were, not many years ago, more than 300,000 people belonging, not to barbarous tribes like the Patháns on the Afghán frontier,<sup>1</sup> nor to the outcasts and scum of the community, but to classes of honourable and comparatively civilised men, who were living under the restraint of special penal laws, because from time immemorial they had killed their female children. Among all the races of India, there is none more noble than the Rájput, and among the Rájputs, the first rank belongs to the Chauháns—the *sangre azul*, as they have been called, of Indian chivalry. No men in India are so proud of their lineage, and they trace their descent, not from mortal ancestors, but from the sacred fire called forth on the summit of Mount Ábu, by one of the sages of the Vedas, to destroy the demons who were persecuting the Brahmans and depriving the gods of their sacrifices. These people are numerous in the United Provinces. In the district of Mainpuri there are more than 30,000 of them, and about sixty years ago it was discovered that among them there was not a single girl. Every daughter that was born was killed. The higher the rank of the family the more constant and systematic was the crime.

<sup>1</sup> The following is extracted from an official report of 1887 —“According to the Pathán code of honour, murder under certain conditions is not a crime but an obligation. Two thousand murderers are believed to be at large in the Peshawar district.” In this case also a special law has been put in force.

"There is at Mainpuri," wrote Mr. Raikes, the magistrate of the district in 1850, "an old fortress which looks far over the valley of the Eesun River. This has been for centuries the stronghold of the Rájá of the Mainpuri Chauháns, whose ancient blood represents the *crème de la crème* of Rájput aristocracy. Here, when a son, a nephew, a grandson was born to the reigning chief, the event was announced to the neighbouring city by the loud discharge of wall-pieces and matchlocks, but centuries had passed away and no infant daughter had been known to smile within those walls"<sup>1</sup>

This is not rhetoric but the statement of a fact. In 1856 special inquiries were instituted. It was found that this practice of infanticide, although especially prevalent among the Rájputs, was by no means confined to them, and it was common not only in the Agra province but in Oudh, the Punjab, and in parts of the Bombay presidency. Numbers of villages were visited where there was not a single girl, and where there had never been one within the memory of man. Of one large Rájput community on the borders of Oudh it was officially reported that "not only are there no girls to be found now, but there never have been any, nor has such an event as the marriage of a daughter taken place for more than two hundred years." In 1869 another investigation showed that there was little change for the better. This was the sort of report—In seven villages, 104 boys, and 1 girl, in twenty-three villages 284 boys, and 23 girls, in other villages, the marriage of a girl an entirely unknown ceremony.

There is an interesting account of the marriage customs of the Rájputs in Sir Alfred Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*. A Rájput cannot marry a woman who is not of the Rájput caste, but at the same time he cannot marry one of his own clan. Within the caste the clans differ in precedence and dignity, and custom prescribes

<sup>1</sup> *Notes on the North Western Provinces of India*, 1852.

that the men of a clan should seek to find their wives in a clan equal or superior to their own, and deem it a disgrace to give their daughters in marriage to men of a lower clan

“The custom makes marriage difficult by narrowing the field of selection, for neither can a man go very far among strange tribes to seek his wife, nor a father to seek a husband for his daughter, so that a poor man often does not marry at all, while a rich man of high birth is besieged with applications for his hand, in order that the stigma of an unmarried daughter may at least be formally removed”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, while an unmarried daughter is looked upon as hopelessly disgraced—and this is true of almost all classes throughout India, and not of Rájputs only—a son-in-law cannot always be found unless the father of the girl is prepared to pay highly, and the marriage of a daughter may mean the ruin of a family. Rather than incur this danger, the Rájput prefers that his daughter should perish. But a still more powerful reason is immemorial custom, which Manu declares to be “transcendent law and the root of all piety.” These people have gone on killing their children generation after generation because their forefathers did so before them, not only without a thought that there is anything criminal in the practice, but with the conviction that it is right.

For many years past measures have been taken for the prevention of this crime. For a long time, in the days when our civilisation was less belligerent than it has since become, it was thought that the best hope of success lay in the removal of the causes which appeared to lead to its commission, and especially in the prevention of extravagant expenditure on marriages, but although these benevolent efforts were undoubtedly useful, their practical results were not great,

<sup>1</sup> *Asiatic Studies*, p. 220

and it became clear that it was only by a stringent and organised system of coercion that these practices would ever be eradicated. In 1870 an Act of the legislature was passed which enabled the Government to deal with the subject. A system of registration of births and deaths among the suspected classes was established, with constant inspection and enumeration of children, special police-officers were entertained at the cost of the guilty communities, and no efforts were spared to convince them that the Government had firmly resolved that it would put down these practices, and would treat the people who followed them as murderers. The history of the administration of these repressive measures is instructive and encouraging. It shows how the steady pressure of the state continued for a number of years on a community for the purpose of putting down a criminal though time-honoured practice eventually results in the acceptance by the members of a new ethical standard, and in the weakening and discarding of the old vicious tradition. At first it was necessary to apply the Act extensively. In 1874 the population living under it numbered 359,000. As time went on many of the communities showed marked improvement, and there were thousands of girls where formerly there were none. In 1881 the population under supervision had fallen to 200,000, in 1891 to 62,000. In 1905 there were only some 10,000 families numbering 27,000 persons on the proclaimed list, and in many of these the practice of infanticide according to the usual tests had ceased. The Government satisfied itself by special inquiries that the Act had done its work, and decided that the protection of infant life might now be left to the ordinary law and to public opinion. The Act has accordingly been withdrawn throughout the province.

Another illustration may be given of the strange conditions that still exist in India, and of the difficulties with which we have to contend. Much of the crime that is committed is carried on by tribes of criminals as their regular and legitimate occupation, not only with no thought of criminality, but in the belief that in following the custom of their forefathers they are acting in the only way that is right. I will not repeat the well-known story of the Thugs, the professional murderers who practised their trade over a great part of India. They have been extirpated by the British Government. Another class of murderers, poisoners by profession, still exists in our own provinces, but in greatly diminished numbers. We have not altogether succeeded in stamping out the professional dacoits, associated for the purposes of violent gang-robbery, but they now chiefly have their headquarters in the native states, from which they carry on their marauding expeditions. Other criminal organisations, with which it is more difficult to deal, abound to this day.

The following quotation from an official report will show what these professional criminals are. They have no resemblance to the habitual criminals of Europe.

"We all know that trades go by castes in India, a family of carpenters will be a family of carpenters a century or five centuries hence, if they last so long, so with grain dealers, blacksmiths, leather makers, and every known trade. If we keep this in mind when we speak of 'professional criminals,' we shall realise what the term really means. It means that the members of a tribe whose ancestors were criminals from time immemorial are themselves destined by the usages of caste to commit crime, and their descendants will be offenders against the law until the whole tribe is exterminated or accounted for in the manner of the Thugs. Therefore, when a man tells you he is a Badhak, or a Kanjai,



or a Sannauriah, he tells you, what few Europeans ever thoroughly realise, that he is an offender against the law, has been so from the beginning, and will be so to the end, that reform is impossible, for it is his trade, his caste—I may almost say his religion—to commit crime ”

Here is an account of one of these tribes called Barwárs Their headquarters are in the district of Gonda, in Oudh, where they inhabit forty-eight villages, and number a thousand families They have little to do with agriculture, they live quietly and honestly at their homes for some months of every year, and the rest of their time is spent in wandering, in small gangs, over distant parts of the country, plundering everything they can find But they may not steal cattle, they may despoil the temples of the gods, they may rob even the goddess Debi, one of the special objects of their worship The only sacred places that they may not touch are the temple of Jaganáth in Orissa, and the shrine of a certain Muhammadan martyr They have a regular organisation, under duly chosen chiefs, every child goes through a form of religious initiation on the twelfth day of his life, if a man of the tribe gives up his thieving profession he is excommunicated and disgraced The time for starting on their predatory expeditions is settled by the astrologers, and the plunder brought home is divided according to fixed rules, after  $3\frac{3}{4}$  per cent has been set aside to be distributed in certain proportions among their gods Each family has in its house an altar, dedicated to the special tutelary god of the tribe, *panch pura*, a god not recognised by other classes, and there is a special ritual for worshipping and conciliating this god

Other criminal tribes are devoted to cattle-stealing, others are dangerous robbers In Gurgáon, one of the

frontier districts of the Punjab, official reports tell us of a large isolated British village, surrounded by native territory, inhabited almost exclusively by some 2000 people of the Mina tribe. Their sole occupation is, and always has been, plunder in the native states, and in distant parts of British India, they give no trouble at home, and, judging from criminal statistics, it would be supposed that they were an honest community. They live amid abundance, in substantial houses, with numerous cattle, fine clothes and jewels, and fleet camels to carry off their plunder, and, it is added, "there is no end to their charity."

In the Agra province there are said to be twenty-nine different tribes who, without any notion of criminality, have from time immemorial made crime their sole serious occupation. Similar predatory tribes no doubt exist in other parts of India where less is known about them.

There is a special law for dealing with these classes. Registers are kept showing all the members of the tribes, they can be compelled to live within certain local limits, and prevented from leaving those limits without permission, and they may be arrested if they are found beyond them. In some cases, the measures taken have been more or less successful, but the difficulties are great, and a long time must elapse before we see the end of the criminal tribes of India. In 1890 the Government of India declared that it was clearly established that improved communications, railways, and telegraphs had greatly facilitated the operations of the classes who are in the habit of leaving their homes to commit crime at a distance and returning with their plunder. More recent inquiries into the working of the police system have confirmed this view.

## NOTE TO CHAPTER XXI. (Page 420)

*Lord Curzon on Indian Progress.*—Lord Curzon, in replying on November 8, 1905, to a Farewell Address from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, said "The sum total of my own experience in the last seven years is to send me away a convinced optimist as to the economic and industrial prospects of this country. I suppose we shall never be free from the chantings of that dismal chorus who spend their time in lamenting the poverty and sufferings of India, without, so far as I can see, doing very much that is practical to remedy the evils of which they complain. Never let us shut our eyes to the poverty and the misery. But do not let us be so blind to the truth as not to see that there is an enormous improvement, that there is everywhere more money in the country, in circulation, in reserves, in investments, in deposits, and in the pockets of the people, that the wages of labour have risen, that the standards of living among the poorest have gone up, that they employ conveniences and even luxuries which a quarter of a century ago were undreamed of, thereby indicating an all-round increase of purchasing power, and that wherever taxation could be held to pinch we have reduced it, and may perhaps be able to do more. It is only fairness to acknowledge these facts, it is blind prejudice to ignore them. I can put the matter in a form which will appeal to you as business men by some figures which I have had prepared. I compare in each case the figures of 1893-94 and those of 1904-5. The capital sunk by Government in railways and irrigation works has increased by 56 per cent in that interval, that invested by joint-stock companies in industrial undertakings by 23 per cent. The Savings Banks' deposits have gone up by 43 per cent, the private deposits in Presidency Banks by 71 per cent, the deposits in other joint-stock banks by 130 per cent, the deposits in Exchange Banks by 95 per cent, Government paper held in India by 29 per cent, the amount invested in Local Authorities' debentures by 90 per cent. The amount of income on which income tax is assessed—excluding at both periods the incomes now exempted—has increased by 29 per cent, the rupee circulation by 27 per cent, the note circulation in active use by 68 per cent. The net absorption of gold in the ten years preceding the two dates of inquiry, namely 1893-94 and 1904-5, shows an increase of 120 per cent in the latter, of silver 136 per cent. The total value of Indian imports has gone up 35 per cent, of exports 48 per cent. The productive debt has increased in the same period by 69 crores, but the non-productive debt has decreased by 16 crores."

## CHAPTER XXII

### BENGAL

Exceptional character of Bengal and its people—The Bengal Lieutenant-Governorship—Natural features, area, and population—Products—Scenery—Climate—Cities—Art—Hindus and Muhammadans—Lord Macaulay's description of the Bengalis—The Muhammadan peasantry—The Permanent Settlement—Zemindars and ryots—Loss of public revenue—Confiscation of the rights of the peasantry—Weakness of the Government—Absence of records of agricultural rights—Former constitution of the Bengal Government—A separate Government constituted—Improvements in the administration—Great increase in rentals of the zemindars and loss by the ryots—Maintenance of conditions of the Permanent Settlement—Claims of the zemindars for exemption from taxation—Rates on the land—Changes in the Bengal Rent Law—Condition of the people in Behar—The Tenancy Acts—Cadastral Surveys—Lord Curzon's Government on the results of the Permanent Settlement

I now propose to give a few sketches of another great British province—Bengal<sup>1</sup> I am the more desirous of doing this because Englishmen are frequently under the impression that Bengal and Bengalis are types of India and its people, the truth being that there is no province which is in all respects more exceptional, and no people more distinct. But these sketches must be

<sup>1</sup> [The 'province of Bengal,' as described in this chapter, no longer exists as an administrative unit. In 1905 the greater part of the 'sub province of Bengal proper' was separated from the rest of the Bengal province, and was united with the province of Assam. The new province thus formed became a separate Lieutenant Governorship under the name of the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. See Note at the end of the Chapter.]

intercourse"<sup>1</sup> The result is that books published in Bengali are, for the most part, quite unintelligible to the people at large

I have already referred to the great progress of the Muhammadan religion in Bengal<sup>2</sup> In 1901, in Bengal proper, the Muhammadans were more numerous than the Hindus, the former numbering 22,287,061, and the latter 21,731,482 In some of the eastern districts the Muhammadans constitute three-fourths of the whole population<sup>3</sup> Although often fanatical in their religion, they are generally totally ignorant of its history and abstruser tenets The chief effect of their conversion has been to give them a more independent bearing and character than the Hindus of the classes to which they belong, and not unfrequently a disregard of life and the rights of property which leads to the commission of heinous and cruel crimes The religion of multitudes of them is so interfused with local superstitions that it might almost be classed among the varieties of Hinduism<sup>4</sup> Changes, however, have been in progress in this respect during the last half-century, and there has been a tendency among the Muhammadans of Bengal, which is still maintained, towards the purification of their faith from animistic superstitions and from Brahmanical influence The great mass of the Musalman population is agricultural, but, even where it is most numerous, wealth and property in land are

<sup>1</sup> *General Report on the Census of India*, 1891, p 143 [In the Report on the Census of 1901 it is said "In no other speech of India is the literary tongue so widely divorced from that of ordinary conversation as in Bengali The two can almost be spoken of as distinct languages, rather than as two dialects of the same language"]

<sup>2</sup> Chapter XVII

<sup>3</sup> [These districts now form part of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam]

<sup>4</sup> [For illustrations of this Mr E A. Gait's report on the 1901 Census of Bengal may be consulted *Census of India, 1901*, vol vi, paras 319-328]

chiefly in the hands of the Hindus. If we look merely to numbers, the Lieutenant-Governor of the province of Bengal<sup>1</sup> was, in Sir William Hunter's words, "as great a Musalman power as the Sultan of Turkey himself," but in our political speculations we need not alarm ourselves about the millions of Muhammadans in Bengal. They lack the capacity, the religious fervour, and the personal vigour which have at other times and in other places swept everything away before the onset of Islam. They have of late years been more and more awakened to the necessity of marching with the times, and of obtaining the advantages of English education, so that they may not be hopelessly defeated in all walks of life by the Hindus. This tendency increases steadily, and much of the bigotry of former generations has already passed away.

The educated Muhammadans deserve to be named with respect. They are not very numerous or wealthy, and cluster chiefly about Calcutta, Dacca, and Patna.

Many years ago Lord Macaulay gave a description of the natives of Bengal. There is good reason, as I have already said, for calling in question the accuracy of some of his historical pictures, based on fallacious records, which have taught to thousands of Englishmen almost all that they know about India; but when Lord Macaulay wrote his character of the Bengalis he was describing, from personal knowledge and observation, a people among whom he had himself lived. Its accuracy has hardly been denied by the Bengalis themselves, and will be disputed by no Englishman.

"The men," he wrote, "by whom this rich vast ~~was~~ people, enervated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful employments, bore the same relation to other nations which the

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- [This refers to the old Hindoo system. See Note on the "partition" at the end of this chapter.]

the inferior holders, and left everything to the judicial tribunals. The patwáris fell into disuse or became the mere servants of the zemindars, the kanungos were abolished. No record of the rights of the ryots and inferior holders was ever made, and even the quinquennial register of superior rights, which was maintained for a time, fell into disuse. When a regular police was established, the zemindars were in practice freed from any effective responsibility for the suppression of crime, or other administrative functions. They became in every sense mere rent receivers."<sup>1</sup>

The consequences of the permanent settlement did not become immediately prominent. At the beginning of the last century the population was far smaller, there was much waste land to be occupied, and there was little disposition or power on the part of the zemindars to disregard the old customary terms on which the land was held. But, as time went on, and population and wealth increased, as cultivators were more readily found, and custom began to give way to competition, the position of the ryots became worse and that of the zemindars became stronger. Other circumstances helped the process of confiscation of the rights of the peasantry. For more than half a century after the permanent settlement was made, the executive government in Bengal was extremely weak. The English principle that in the ordinary affairs of life the less the state interferes with individual action the better, and that for the protection of private rights little more is required than the maintenance of order, with good courts of justice accessible to all, is admirable when applied to the government of Englishmen, but it is unsuitable to India, and there could be no people to which it was less applicable than the people of Bengal. This principle of non-interference was carried out in that province

<sup>1</sup> *System of Land Tenures in Various Countries*, published by the Cobden Club, p. 176

to an extent unknown in any other part of India. Nothing would have so much helped the timid people of Bengal in social and political progress as the just and active and masterful administration of Englishmen, resolute that the rights of the weak should be respected, determined to satisfy themselves by personal knowledge that this was done, and possessing power to interfere effectively on behalf of those who could not protect themselves. A system of administration which left it to the courts of justice to remedy any oppression of which the sufferer might complain, or which he might be able to prove, practically resulted in providing no remedy at all.

I showed in a former chapter<sup>1</sup> that in other provinces of India an elaborate machinery has been spread over the whole country, extending its ramifications into every village, for the purpose of maintaining an accurate record of the rights and liabilities of all classes of the agricultural population. In the greater part of Bengal nothing of the sort exists. There has been, until lately, no cadastral survey and no record of agricultural rights, but within recent years these have been introduced throughout the greater part of Behár and in Orissa, as well as in other districts and in estates under Government management. Under the arrangements of the permanent settlement, the Government has no anxiety about the collection of its land revenue. The whole responsibility for punctual payment falls upon the zemindar. If he does not pay at the district treasury on the appointed date, no questions are asked, there may or may not have been causes which make immediate payment difficult, these are matters with which the Government does not concern itself, it is enough that

<sup>1</sup> Chapter XIX



absence of leases and counterparts, the universal prevalence of illegal distraint, the practice of amalgamating holdings so as to destroy evidence of continuous occupation, are evils which necessarily prevent any possible development of agricultural prosperity among the tenant class, and place them entirely at the mercy of their landlords " The Indian Famine Commissioners of 1880, not long afterwards, pressed the same subject on the attention of the Government

"Where," they said, "as in Behár, the relations of landlord and tenant are those of a high-handed proprietary body on the one hand, habitually disregarding the law, and on the other a tenantry, ignorant, very helpless, and sunk in the most abject poverty, the onus of bringing complaints ought not to be laid on the tenants, and the first and most important duty of the Bengal Government and of the officials would seem to be to guard zealously against infringements of the law by the rich, and to put them down as if they were offences against the public peace " "It was proved," writes Mr Finucane, the head of the agricultural department in Bengal, "by indisputable evidence, that the rents of ryots in Behár have during the past fifty years been illegally and arbitrarily enhanced out of all proportion to what the landlords were under the law entitled to demand, and to what the tenants were legally liable to pay Though the rent law gave the ryot certain rights, he was so helpless or so ignorant that he was unable to assert these rights out of court, or to go into court to enforce them."

I will make a few more extracts from official reports regarding the condition of the people in parts of Behár

"The gross rental of permanently settled estates being at the lowest estimate five times the amount payable by landholders as Government revenue, there can, as a matter of course, be no difficulty in realising that revenue under the sunset law But there are certain tracts in which, though the permanently settled land revenue may be realised, yet the sums realised by the Government have had again to be expended, many fold increased, on charitable relief which became necessary in order to prevent

mortality by starvation. Such pre-eminently is the province of Behār, and specially the three northern districts of Darbhanga, Mozaffarpur, and Sāran. Within a period of seventeen years there have been five in which a portion of the people of this part of the province have died of starvation. The whole conditions of agricultural industry are such as to render it precarious. It is impossible for the people to fall back in one year of partial failure of crops on the accumulated reserves of a previous year, whether of grain, property, money, or credit. Thus, in the one district of Darbhanga, which is taken as being the worst of all in these respects—a district which is one of the most fertile, best cultivated, and highly favoured by nature in all India—it was necessary for the Government to expend in one year, on one famine in 1874, by way of charitable relief, no less than £370,000 in cash, and 118,000 tons of grain, valued in Burma at £9 per ton. If to this be added the cost of transport, and cost of famine establishment, it will not be too much to put down the net cost of famine to Government in this single district at £1,500,000, the Government revenue being less than £50,000 per annum. The famine expenditure in this district, in one year, was more than thirty times the amount of the Government revenue, and far more than its capitalised value. Yet the rental of the district was no less than twelve times the amount of the Government revenue. It is not alone on famine relief that enormous sums have been expended in this part of the country. There has been also a great outlay on state railways, which, though they may facilitate the importation of grain in times of distress, can in ordinary times be of little benefit to the mass of the peasantry, for it is evident that so long as landlords are permitted to take advantage of the local competition for land in order to enhance rents illegally, it is they, and they only, who appropriate the profits resulting from that rise in prices which attends the opening up of means of communication. Besides £200,000 expended on a temporary famine railway to Darbhanga in 1874, there has been an expenditure on the Tirhut state railway of £1,300,000 within the past ten years ”<sup>1</sup>

Much, however, has been done, since the facts just quoted were described, to ameliorate the condition of the

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Agricultural Department in Bengal for 1886*

peasantry in Behár The Tenancy Act which became law in 1885 defined the position of tenants, and this has been still further consolidated by the institution, still in progress, of a cadastral survey and record of rights In the famine of 1897 it was found that only a small proportion of the tenantry accepted relief, and the extent of their resources surpassed the general expectation, those who were employed on relief works belonged almost entirely to the class of landless day labourers, the numbers of whom were large

Some of the zemindars of Behár are among the richest men in India The estates of the Rájá of Darbhanga, in the district just mentioned, have an area of 2400 square miles, a population of more than 750,000, and a rental exceeding £130,000 a year The increase in the net rental of the zemindars of north Behár in the last three generations has been immense At the time of the permanent settlement it was about £26,000 at the exchange of the day, and in 1893, a hundred years later, it was about £1,350,000<sup>1</sup> If the intentions of the framers of the settlement had been carried out, the larger part of this vast sum would have been in the possession of the unfortunate peasants whose rights have been swept away

Happily, the condition of the agricultural population in the greater part of Bengal is much better than in Behár, the necessity for their protection was urgent, but they were not reduced to a condition such as that common in Behár, climatic conditions are such that the productive powers of the land are not precarious, and they live, as a rule, in reasonable comfort

<sup>1</sup> Minute by Sir Antony MacDonnell, Officiating Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, 21st September 1893 See Parliamentary Return, No 448, 22nd November 1893, page 57

The discussion of the measures required for placing the law of landlord and tenant throughout Bengal on a better footing continued for many years. In 1885 the "Bengal Tenancy Act" was passed by the Governor-General in Council, mainly with the view of benefiting the tenantry of Behár. I will not attempt to describe all its provisions, but its value cannot be doubted. It aimed at giving protection to the ryots without interfering with the rights of landlords. It defined the position of the various classes of landlords and tenants, the incidents of the various tenures, the conditions under which rights of occupancy in the land could be acquired and maintained, the manner in which rents were to be regulated, enhanced, and reduced, the circumstances under which evictions might take place, it imposed penalties for illegal exactions, laid down rules regarding compensation for improvements, gave power to the Government to order surveys and the preparation of records of rights, and dealt with a multitude of other matters of importance. There has undoubtedly been in recent years immense improvement. In the words of a paper which has been already quoted, "the rise in the price of agricultural produce has benefited all who have such produce to sell. For a long time the landlords contrived to appropriate the greater part of the benefit, but partly owing to the increase in the number of districts and the creation of subdivisions, which have let the light of day into the remotest parts of the country, and partly owing to the Bengal Tenancy Act and the operations under it, a fair share has at last been secured to the ryot"<sup>1</sup>

The passing of the Tenancy Act was an excellent

<sup>1</sup> "Memorandum on the Material Condition of the People of Bengal," by L. P. Shurres, C S

which is not justified by the single great experiment that has been made in India, and which was found in the latter case to place the tenant so unreservedly at the mercy of the landlord that the state has been compelled to employ for his protection a more stringent measure of legislation than has been found necessary in temporarily settled areas. It is not, in fine, in the permanent settlement of Bengal that the ryot has found his salvation, it has been in the laws which have been passed by the supreme Government to check its license and to moderate its abuses”<sup>1</sup>

## NOTE TO CHAPTER XXII

### THE ‘PARTITION’ OF BENGAL

The province of Bengal, and the sub-province of Bengal ‘proper’ or ‘lower’ Bengal, as described in the foregoing chapter, no longer exist as administrative units. It had long been recognised that the province, with its area of 189,000 square miles and its population of 74 millions, was too heavy a charge for one man. It was by far the largest and the most important provincial government. The Lieutenant-Governor was tied to Calcutta during the winter months, and his time largely occupied by municipal and other local questions, and by official and ceremonial functions. He was able to see very little of his vast territories. The work of government in Bengal had come to be less personal in its character than in any other, and the standard of administration was believed to have deteriorated, notably in the Muhammadan districts in the east. In 1903 Lord Curzon’s government resolved to deal comprehensively with the matter and reconstruct the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal by transfers of territory between it and adjoining provinces. The first draft of a reconstruction scheme, which was published for criticism and discussion, proposed a moderate enlargement of the Chief Commissionership of Assam lying to the north of Bengal, and some interchanges of territory between Bengal and its southern neighbours, the Central Provinces and Madras, involving a net loss of some 11 millions of population to the reconstructed province. The proposals were

<sup>1</sup> *Papers regarding the Revenue System of British India*, presented to Parliament, p. 3

in the end withdrawn in favour of a much larger scheme, which was considered to provide in a more satisfactory and adequate way for the relief of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal, and also to secure better the legitimate interests of the people of the transferred districts. By this scheme the province of Assam, with its population of 6 millions, was united with the eastern territories of the province of Bengal, and formed into a Lieutenant-Governorship. The new province thus constituted was given the name of Eastern Bengal and Assam. It has a population of 31 millions, of whom 18 millions are Muhammadans and 12 millions Hindus. It possesses a Legislative Council and a Board of Revenue. The jurisdiction of the High Court of Calcutta is left undisturbed. Some readjustment of territory between the province of Bengal and the Central Provinces was at the same time effected. The Uriya-speaking district of Sambalpur was transferred from the Central Provinces and added to the sub-province of Orissa, as were also five small Uriya native states, while five Hindi-speaking native states were transferred from Bengal to the Central Provinces. The province of Bengal, as now constituted, comprises an area of 141,000 square miles with a population of 54 millions, of whom 42 millions are Hindus and 9 millions Muhammadans. It has parted with 40,000 square miles of territory and 24,000,000 inhabitants. Substantial relief has thus been given to the provincial Government. But Bengal still remains the largest and most important province in India, and for its better administration the Lieutenant-Governor has been given the assistance of an executive council of three members.

As this redistribution of territory and reconstruction of provincial boundaries have now passed into the region of settled facts, it is unnecessary to speculate whether the requisite measure of relief could have been given to the administration of Bengal in some other way that might have provoked less agitation and unrest among the classes whose interests and feelings were affected. Nor is it necessary to inquire how far those interests were of a private or of a public order, how far those feelings were genuine or simulated, or how far they had a rational basis or were the offspring of imagination and suspicion. The 'partition' of Bengal will long remain a landmark of social disorder, and the harbinger of an unhappy era of criminal acts and conspiracies against British rule. That era, we may hope, is passing away, and with its passing the bitterness which the creation of the new province evoked will give place to an acknowledgment that the new province is justifying its existence in the increased prosperity and development of the districts included in it. There is ample evidence that the eastern districts of Bengal were ill-cared for and overlooked in the past. There are already encouraging signs of progress and contentment now that they possess their own local Government and their own Legislative Council.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE ARMY IN INDIA

The ultimate basis of our dominion—Indian interests beyond the limits of India—The advance of Russia—Defence of North-West Frontier—The Frontier tribes—Formation of the North-West Frontier Province—Results of the advance of Russia—The armies of India before 1857—The Mutinies—The reorganisation of the Native Army—Its present constitution—Its fighting qualities—The Bengal Army—The Officers of the Indian Army—The Police—Increase of the army in 1885—Present strength—The British troops—Improvement in their health—Hill stations—Frontier and Port defences—Volunteers—Changes in 1893 and in 1905 in constitution of Army—Existing commands—Abolition of the Military Member—Armies of the Native States—Special contingents for Imperial service.

IN this book I profess to speak of nothing except of India itself, its internal administration, and its progress under British rule. There are other subjects, of the utmost gravity, with which Indian interests are intimately connected, of which, although I am silent regarding them, it must not be supposed that I fail to recognise the importance, believing, as I do, that the position of England as the greatest power of the world, with which, indeed, her national existence in a form worthy of her is inseparably bound up, depends upon the maintenance of her Indian Empire. The ultimate basis of our dominion in India is obviously our military or, to speak more accurately, our naval power, and this to be efficient must be capable of being exercised on sea and land not

only within India itself but far beyond her borders. The problems connected with the advance of Russia to the frontiers of Afghánistán, and our relations with the latter country, are far from their final solution. In Persia and the Persian Gulf, in Arabia, in Africa, in Tibet, in China, and in Siam there are great Indian and Imperial interests which, let us trust, British statesmen will never forget, and which they will defend with all the power of the empire. By the military positions that we now occupy and by the construction of railways, we have gained for the north-western frontiers of India a great accession of military and political strength, and a not less important step towards that end has been the adoption of wiser methods in dealing with the wild and warlike tribes which have given to us such constant causes of anxiety. These causes still remain, but those most competent to judge now look forward hopefully to the time when they may cease to be, as they have been in the past, a serious source of military weakness. A most important step towards that end was the formation, in 1901, of the North-West Frontier province, by which the frontier districts were severed from the Punjab, and placed under a separate administration under the immediate control of the supreme Government. This measure, advocated long ago by Lord Lytton, although in a different form, as a matter of urgent necessity, was at last successfully accomplished by Lord Curzon.

All these are subjects into which I cannot enter, but it must never be forgotten how profoundly the proximity of a great European Power has altered our position in India, and that it is not only our military position that has been affected. The change has been felt throughout India. It has thrown into the minds of men uncertainties



regarding the future, it has disturbed the finances, and thus has retarded the progress of works essential to the prosperity of the country, and checked improvement in the administration<sup>1</sup> No Englishman who deserves the name will for a moment doubt our resolution to maintain our Empire, or that we can render India invulnerable, but statesmen will do well to remember that nothing can save us, sooner or later, from attack, except the certainty on the part of those who may desire to assail us, that every hostile attempt must end in disastrous failure The condition among all others obviously essential to our success is one on which I need not dilate absolute supremacy at sea gave to us our empire, and without it the maintenance of that empire in India or elsewhere will be impossible

Although I can say nothing more on the serious subjects to which I have been referring, some account must be given of the constitution of the army in India

In the earlier times of the East India Company, a military force grew up in each of the three presidencies

<sup>1</sup> [The situation has been changed and greatly ameliorated by the Anglo Russian Convention of the 31st August 1907 By it the two powers, "animated by the sincere desire to settle by mutual agreement different questions concerning the interests of their states on the continent of Asia," concluded "agreements destined to prevent all cause of misunderstanding between Great Britain and Russia in regard to the questions referred to" The agreements included (1) an arrangement concerning Persia, based on the principle that the two powers would respect the integrity and independence of that country and desired to avoid all cause of conflict between their respective interests in certain provinces adjoining, or in the neighbourhood of, the Russian frontier on the one hand and the frontiers of Afghánistán and Baluchistán on the other hand. (2) An arrangement concerning Afghánistán, based on the principle that the British Government had no intention of changing the political status of Afghánistán, and that the Russian Government recognised that Afghánistán was outside the sphere of Russian influence. (3) An arrangement concerning Tibet, by which the two powers engaged to respect the territorial integrity of that country, and to abstain from all interference in its internal administration. It was stipulated that the arrangement concerning Afghánistán would not come into force until the consent of the Ameer to its terms had been signified by His Majesty's Government to the Russian Government This assent has not yet been signified.]

of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay Three distinct armies came into existence, and until not long ago they still remained

The principal extensions of territory having occurred, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the presidency of Bengal, the army of Bengal became the most important of the three, in 1856, the year before the mutinies, it was more numerous than the other two armies together In that year the British forces in India consisted of 39,000 Europeans and 215,000 natives, besides several contingents, as they were called, maintained for the protection of native states, and at their expense

The native army of Bengal, consisting in 1856 of seventy-four regiments of infantry, with ten regiments of regular and eighteen of irregular cavalry, was mainly recruited, especially for the infantry, from the Brahmans and Rájputs of Oudh, and in a lesser degree from what is now the Agra province A part of the Bombay army and of the contingents was supplied from the same classes The army of Madras was recruited from its own presidency Besides the regular army, and various local corps, there was a strong force of so-called irregular cavalry and infantry, the most important part of which was raised in the Punjab from Sikhs, Patháns, and other warlike races This body of troops, known as the Punjab Frontier Force, guarded the northern frontier, and was under the orders of the provincial Government The greater part of the artillery in India was manned by native soldiers

About one-third of the European infantry and all the European artillery were local troops, raised by the East India Company for permanent service in India They numbered about 14,000 men

In 1857 almost the whole of the Bengal native army, a part of that of Bombay, and the contingents in northern India, mutinied. The Madras army remained faithful. The Punjab Frontier Force was not only faithful, but rendered admirable service in the suppression of the revolt.

Before peace was restored the old Bengal army had ceased to exist. The Government was transferred to the Crown, and the whole military organisation was altered. The local European army was abolished. The artillery, which had been chiefly native, became almost wholly British. The place of the local European infantry was supplied by British regiments of the line. The total strength of European troops was largely increased, while that of the native army was largely diminished. Three distinct armies—those of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay—were still maintained. After the new arrangements had been completed, the army in India consisted of about 62,000 British and 135,000 native troops.

I quote from the report of the Indian Army Organisation Commission of 1879 the following summary of the changes made after the mutinies, but, as I shall show, it became necessary in 1885 to increase the numbers both of British and native troops —

“On the reorganisation of the army, after the mutiny was quelled, it was decided that the proportion of native and European troops in India should never greatly exceed two to one, and that the field and other artillery should be exclusively, or almost exclusively, manned by Europeans. All the fortresses in the country are now served by British artillery. All the heavy batteries and all the batteries of field artillery are manned by Europeans. The lessons taught by the mutiny have thus led to the maintenance of the two great principles of retaining in the country an irresistible force of British troops, and of keeping the artillery in the hands of Europeans.

"Our position in the country has very materially changed, and a force of 62,000 European soldiers represents a power far in excess of that which it represented in 1857. In those days the British troops were scattered in small forces throughout the country, and it was a matter of great difficulty, delay, and expense to concentrate even a small British force on any one spot in India. When the mutiny broke out we had hardly 400 miles of railway complete in the country, while at the present moment we have 8312 miles of railway open<sup>1</sup>

"All our great cantonments, all our fortresses and arsenals, save one, are now connected with each other, and with the seaboard, by railway. The strength of our European troops for action at any point, within or without the borders of British India, has thus been enormously increased. For example, whereas in 1857 a regiment took three or four months to march from the seaboard to Lahore, it can now move from Calcutta to Lahore in a week. Reinforcements from England, which then occupied three months on a voyage round the Cape, now land in Bombay within thirty days of leaving England. Again, the power of British troops has been indefinitely increased by their armament with breech-loading rifles, and by the substitution of rifled field-pieces of higher power for the smooth-bore six-pounder, nine-pounder, and mountain guns of the mutiny era. In any contest within the borders, or on the frontiers of India, these improved armaments would tell heavily, for the troops of Afghanistan, Burma, Nepal, Gwahar, Hyderabad, and the Cis-Sutlej States are for the most part still armed with smooth-bore muzzle-loading weapons."

Before the mutinies of 1857, the infantry of the Bengal army was, as I have already said, mainly recruited from the Brahmans and Rájputs of Oudh and the present Agra province. Although men of fine physique, they were not remarkable for fighting efficiency, and the former reputation of the native army of Bengal was certainly exaggerated. Most of its triumphs were mainly due to the British troops who

<sup>1</sup> [On 31st March 1910 nearly 34,500 miles of railway were open or under construction.]

were associated with it. The ruinous consequences of drawing the larger proportion of our soldiers from a single class, under the influence of the same feelings and interests, and holding more than any other people in India the strictest prejudices of caste, were shown by the events of 1857. The old system was abandoned, and I quote from the report of the Indian Army Commission a description of that which took its place —

“The systems of recruiting for the several armies are diverse. Regiments of the Madras and Bombay armies draw their recruits from many tribes and castes over the several recruiting grounds of those presidencies, and the Bombay regiments have an admixture of Sikhs and Hindustanis from northern India in their ranks. These armies are thus composed of what are called ‘mixed recruits’—that is to say, of corps in which men of different races, several religions, and many provinces are thrown together into the same company or troop. In the Bengal and Punjab armies the majority of corps are what are called ‘class company regiments’—that is to say, the regiments draw recruits from three or more different races and recruiting grounds, but the men of each class or race are kept apart in separate companies. Thus, an infantry regiment may have two companies of Sikhs, two companies of Hindustani Brahmans and Rájputs, two companies of Punjabi Muhammadans, one company of Trans Indus Patháns, and one company of Dogras from the Kángra or Jamu hills. Such a regiment would be a class company regiment, the native officers of each company would ordinarily belong to the race, tribe, or sect from which the company was recruited. In the northern army are a limited number of ‘class regiments,’ which are composed of men belonging to one caste or tribe. Such, for instance, are the Gurkha corps, recruited entirely from the hardy short-statured highlanders of the Nepál hills, the Pioneer regiments, which consist exclusively of men of the Muzbi tribe, who in the early days of Sikh rule were despised outcasts, whose noblest calling was thieving, but who are now among the flower of the northern army.”

The Army Commission from whose report these

extracts have been taken was appointed by the Government of Lord Lytton when the Afghan War of 1878-80 had disclosed serious defects in the organisation of the army. The report was the starting-point of many far-reaching reforms which have brought the Indian army to its present state of efficiency. Strange as it may seem, fifteen years elapsed before the home authorities decided to give effect to its most important recommendation. It was not until 1895, as will be explained hereafter in describing the administration of military affairs in India, that the presidency army system, involving the existence of three separate armies under three commanders-in-chief, was abolished, and a unified Indian army created under the administration of one commander-in-chief and under the sole control of the Government of India. In the interval many important reforms were carried out in the three armies. In particular the system of 'class' battalions (as opposed to 'class' company battalions) was more largely applied, as it was found to attract a better stamp of men and to make the army a more popular service. In the Bengal army the number of trans-frontier men were increased, and when in 1885 nine infantry battalions were added to that army they were formed of Gurkhas and Sikhs. Similarly in the Madras and Bombay armies, some battalions were reconstituted, and Sikhs, Punjabi Muhammadans and Gurkhas substituted for men of southern India. More extensive changes in the same direction have since been made in the Madras army. The proportion of soldiers drawn from unwarlike races has been greatly reduced, a number of infantry battalions being transformed into battalions of Punjabis, and the cavalry regiments receiving a strong infusion of men from Rajputana and the Punjab. The amalgama-

tion of the three armies into a single Indian army has enabled the substitution of superior fighting races to be carried out with more freedom and with better results than was possible under the former system.

The native army is recruited by voluntary enlistment. The infantry are clothed, armed, and equipped by the state, but the men provide their own food, and, with some assistance, they themselves, according to the old custom of the country, build the lines in which they live. On foreign service beyond sea, or in campaigns beyond the frontiers of India, they receive rations from the commissariat. Except in the Madras command, where the native cavalry are in these respects on the same footing as the infantry, this branch of the service is organised on what is called the *silladár* system. The men provide their own uniform, their arms, excepting breech-loading carbines, their equipment, and their horses; they feed themselves and their horses, build their own lines, and provide their own camp equipage and carriage on the line of march. Their pay is fixed at a rate which enables them to meet all these charges.

Considering the great variety of the sources from which the native army is recruited, there is much variety in its military qualities, and all recent measures have been designed with the object of enabling the Government of India to place rapidly in the field the largest possible number of troops composed of the best fighting material. It would be difficult to find in any country finer soldiers than Sikhs, Patháns, and Gurkhas, and in case of necessity there would be no difficulty in making at short notice a large addition to their numbers. There can be no doubt that a large portion of our native army is now equal to the troops

of any European state, and is fit to take its place anywhere in the field by the side of British soldiers

The most efficient section of the native army is undoubtedly that of the north, stationed in the Punjab and on the north-western frontier, and consisting entirely of men belonging to the most vigorous and martial races of India. Among its other excellent elements it comprises several battalions of Gurkhas, soldiers whose fighting qualities can hardly be surpassed. The Punjab Frontier Force at one time formed a virtually distinct army under the Government of the Punjab, and although it has now become an integral part of the Indian army, the regiments of which it was once composed retain the special traditions of valour and efficiency in border warfare of the old force.

Although the old name of the 'Bengal Army' was until recently retained, it had, as already noticed, long become somewhat of a misnomer, for there was not a single native of Bengal in its ranks, and only a small part of it was ever stationed in Bengal. In the two Bengals there are a few thousand men at places on the railway connecting Calcutta with northern India, and near the frontier of Nepal and other hill states, and there are usually four or five thousand men in Calcutta and its neighbourhood. In the rest of the provinces of Bengal and eastern Bengal, with their population of more than 78,000,000, there are hardly any troops. Sir William Hunter was well within the mark when he said that, in that province, "probably 40,000,000 of people go through life without once seeing the gleam of a bayonet or the face of a soldier."

The 'Officers of the Indian Army,' known until the 1st January 1903 under the designation of the 'Indian Staff Corps,' supply the British officers of the



native army A staff corps for each of the three armies of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay was established in 1861, when the native army was reorganised The officers of the corps were, in the first instance, transferred from the East India Company's army, and subsequently they were drawn from British regiments of the line or artillery In 1891 the three staff corps were amalgamated into a single body, and the Officers of the Indian Army, as they are now called, are about 2700 in number They are mainly recruited by the appointment of candidates from the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, but some are accepted from the British army serving in India After the probation of a year's duty with a British regiment in India, and another year's duty with a native regiment, and after passing examinations in the native languages and in professional subjects, an officer is finally approved for service, and he is then eligible for military employment in any part of India In respect of regimental appointments, an officer ordinarily remains with the regiment or battalion to which he was first posted For their higher professional training and training in military staff duties, an Indian Staff College at Quetta has been established The officers of the Indian Army are employed not only in the native army and in military appointments on the staff, but also in a large number of civil posts They hold the majority of appointments in the political, or, as we should call it in England, the diplomatic department, and many administrative and judicial offices in non-regulation provinces

Before 1857 duties were often performed by the native army which were really duties of police, and the great reduction, amounting to more than 90,000 men, made in the numbers of the army after the suppression

of the mutinies, was followed by a complete reorganisation of the police throughout India. The number of men available for military duty was, therefore, not diminished to the extent that the figures seem to show. Exclusive of the village police, of whom there are some 700,000, the regular police force in India consists of about 170,000 officers and men, of whom more than half have firearms, and are more or less drilled. There is no part of British India in which the people habitually carry arms, or commonly possess them, and the occasions are rare—not, on an average, more than two or three in each year—on which, usually in consequence of religious disputes between Hindus and Muhammadans, or between other sects, it is necessary to call out troops to assist the civil power in maintaining order. Considering that the population of British India exceeds that of the five great powers of Europe together, this furnishes an illustration of the quiet character of the people.

In 1885 the altered position of Russia on the frontiers of Afghánistán, and the apprehension of war, rendered it necessary to reconsider the whole question of our military position. The result was a determination to increase both the European and native army. The British force received an addition, in cavalry, artillery and infantry, of about 11,000 officers and men, while the number of the native troops was increased by 19,000. Five new battalions of Gurkhas were added to the infantry. Altogether the army in India was increased by about 30,000 men. In 1909 the total strength was nearly 225,000 officers and men of all arms, of whom rather more than 75,700 were British. This is exclusive of the active reserve, consisting of men who have served with the colours in the native infantry from five to twelve years. There are

now about 40,000 men in the reserve, but it will ultimately attain larger proportions

Apart from the addition to their numbers, the efficiency of the British troops in India has been greatly increased by other causes. Among all the changes that have occurred since the transfer of the Government to the Crown, there is not one over which we have better reason to rejoice than the improvement in the health of our soldiers. The Royal Commission which inquired in 1859 into the sanitary condition of the army reported that the average death-rate among the British troops in India, for the forty years ending with 1856, had been 69 per thousand. This was six times as high as the rate among Englishmen of the same ages at home. The Commission expressed the hope that the rate might be reduced by measures of sanitary improvement to 20 per thousand, or even lower. This hope has been more than fulfilled. In the ten years ending with 1879 the death-rate was 19 per thousand, and during recent years the average has not been more than 10 per thousand<sup>1</sup>. No efforts have been spared to improve in every way the position of the British soldiers in India. They now live in barracks which, in comfort and in all sanitary conditions, excepting those conditions of climate over which we have no control, probably surpass any that can be found in any other country. Every regiment, battery, and depot has its regimental institute, a sort of soldiers' club, with refreshment department, library, reading and recreation rooms, a temperance association room, and a theatre. The issue of spirits has been

<sup>1</sup> It must be admitted that this comparison is not altogether accurate, because the figures given by the Royal Commission included all the deaths that had occurred in the numerous campaigns of the previous forty years. Making, however, allowance for this, the rate of mortality was extremely high. The death rate among the *native* troops was returned by the Commission at 20 per thousand. It is now only 7 per thousand.

diminished, and is discouraged, while every encouragement is given to useful employment and occupation for the men. Cantonments for 25 per cent of the whole force have been provided at stations in the Himálaya or other mountains. The education of soldiers' children is provided for partly in regimental schools and partly in the Lawrence Asylums in the hills, excellent institutions, originally founded by the liberality of Sir Henry Lawrence, and now largely assisted by the Government.

Other measures have greatly added to our military strength in India. All points on the north-western frontier at which attack seems possible are now guarded by strongly-fortified positions, and connected with the railway system of India, the principal ports have been fortified and armed with modern guns, and the defence of the harbours is secured by a flotilla of turret-ships, torpedo gunboats, and torpedo boats. The native army and volunteers have been armed with the latest pattern rifle, and the establishment of a cordite factory has rendered the army self-supporting, to a great extent, in regard to its ammunition in case of necessity. The artillery has been re-armed with quick-firing guns. The supply and transport services have been strengthened and reorganised, and all other arrangements made that will enable an army of nine infantry divisions and eight cavalry brigades to be mobilised and placed in the field with a degree of rapidity hitherto unattainable in India. Another very important measure has been the formation of volunteer corps. There are already in India 36,000 volunteers, nearly all British, of whom 32,000 are effective and well armed. The defensive value of this force can hardly be over-stated. If it had existed in 1857, many of the catastrophes of that time would undoubtedly have been prevented.

Supreme authority over the army in India is vested by law<sup>1</sup> in the Governor-General in Council. Subject to the administrative control of the Governor-General in Council, the chief executive officer of the army is the Commander-in-Chief in India. Until 1893 he held special command of the troops in the Bengal Presidency, and he exercised a general control over the armies of Madras and Bombay, each of which had its local commander-in-chief. The Governments of those presidencies possessed, until the same time, certain administrative powers.

Although the ultimate military authority rested with the Governor-General in Council and Commander-in-Chief in India, this system of divided control led to much inconvenience, especially in time of war, and it became clear that it must be altered, and that the armies of Madras and Bombay must no longer remain in the exceptional position of being partially subject to the control of the provincial Governments and the local commanders-in-chief. The Army Commission of 1879 recommended the abolition of the presidency army system, and the unification of the army in India. The necessary change could not be made without the authority of Parliament, and it was not until the close of 1893 that this was obtained. The delay did not prevent the completion of many other reforms in military administration, and before 1893 all the army departments, except the medical, had been brought directly under the orders of the supreme Government.

The Act of 1893 abolished the offices of the provincial commanders-in-chief, it provided that the powers which had been exercised by them should be transferred to such officer as the Commander-in-Chief in India, with

the approval of the Governor-General in Council, might appoint, that the powers of the Commander-in-Chief in India should extend to the whole of India, that all the powers of military control which had been vested in the Governments of Madras and Bombay should cease, and be exercised by the Governor-General in Council, and that the officers commanding the troops in those presidencies should no longer be members of the provincial Councils

As a sequel to this legislation the unified army of India was divided in 1895 into four territorial commands, named after the Punjab, Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. Each command was placed under a lieutenant-general for administrative purposes. Further changes have since been made on the initiative of Lord Kitchener, who was Commander-in-Chief for six and a half years, from 1902 to 1909. The defects of the 'territorial command' system were that the 'commands' were not in any way organised army corps, and were too large to serve as units in the case of war. The 'divisional' system has therefore been adopted. The army in India is now divided into ten divisional commands, each being a self-contained unit with adequate transport and supply services, so organised and trained as to be able to place a division in the field as a complete fighting force, at short notice. Along with this change extensive changes in the distribution of the army in the several provinces have been made. The garrisons on the north-west frontier have been largely increased, and generally the troops are much more concentrated than was formerly the case. The divisional commanders have been given large powers and responsibilities, and much work which formerly had to be referred to headquarters is now locally disposed of. For supervision and inspection

purposes the divisions are grouped in two armies—the northern army and the southern army,—each commanded by a lieutenant-general, who forms the intermediate link between the divisional generals and the Commander-in-Chief.

It remains to say something about the administration of military business in the Government of India. Up to 1905 one of the 'ordinary' members of the Governor-General's Council was a military officer. He was commonly known as the 'military member'. He was in charge of the 'military department,' roughly corresponding to the old War Office in England, and was the medium through whom the proposals of the Commander-in-Chief were submitted to the Governor-General in Council. The Commander-in-Chief was also on the Council as an 'extraordinary member,' and without a departmental portfolio. In 1905, after considerable discussion between the Government of India and the Secretary of State the military member was abolished, and the military department in a reconstituted form and under the title of the 'army department' was placed under the Commander-in-Chief. At the same time a department of 'military supply,' dealing with the services of supply and manufacture of military stores, was formed, and placed under the charge of a military officer, added to the Council as 'military supply' member. The Commander-in-Chief under this arrangement represented the 'army department' in the Governor-General's Council. After three years' trial of the new system it was decided that the restricted duties assigned to the 'military supply' member did not justify the retention of the office. The military supply department was accordingly amalgamated with the army department,

and the Commander-in-Chief now singly represents the army in the Council of the Governor-General.

The armies of the native states have still to be mentioned. They look formidable on paper, numbering, according to some estimates, 93,000 men, but a small portion only of these so-called armies has any military organisation. They consist for the most part of men who can hardly be called soldiers. The majority of them are maintained for purposes of display, without the least idea that they can ever be used for fighting. The so-called army includes multitudes of the armed retainers of the chiefs and nobles, and nearly the whole of the men whom we should class as police.

Among all the armies of the native states, that of Gwalior is the most completely organised. It consists of about 11,000 men, of whom about 6000 are cavalry, all fairly drilled and disciplined, with several fully-equipped batteries of artillery. A very small part of the Gwalior troops consists of men recruited in that country. The great majority of them come from our territories, and chiefly from the classes which before the mutinies of 1857 supplied the bulk of our Bengal army. The government of Sindhia is, as I shall show, that of a foreign Marátha dynasty, the people are unwarlike and disinclined for military service. The strength of the forces which may be maintained is regulated by treaty with the British Government.

The largest of the armies of the native states is that of the Nizam of Haiderabad, also a foreigner in the country belonging to him. It is so heterogeneous a body that it is difficult to state its numbers, but that part of it which may with some show of reason be called an army has been estimated at about 45,000 men. A portion of it has been reorganised and improved.



Many of these troops are foreign mercenaries from distant parts of India, and many are Patháns from our northern frontier. While they perform no useful service to the Nizam, it has been necessary to watch and overawe them, and the necessity has been imposed on us of always keeping a large force of British and native troops at Haiderabad. A native force, called the Haiderabad Contingent, consisting of more than 7000 men of all arms under the command of British officers, was also maintained for the Nizam's protection in his territories, and the charges for it met from the revenues of the Berár districts, which were assigned to us for the purpose in 1853 by treaty. In 1903, in consequence of the arrangement come to with the Nizam by Lord Curzon in respect of the Berárs, the contingent was broken up and distributed over the Madras and Bombay commands<sup>1</sup>

The troops of the Rájputána states are, on paper, numerous, but the figures have no military significance. The men are not, for the most part, soldiers in the service of the state, but the members of a military class. There is no doubt of the loyalty of the Rájput chiefs or of their followers.

The troops of the Sikh states deserve mention. "They are" (in the words of the Indian Army Commission) "of good material, they are well officered, and have on occasions done excellent service for the British Crown. They are devoted to their chiefs, who are conspicuously loyal, and bound to the British Government by mutual goodwill and good offices, which have extended over many years."

One important addition has to be made to the foregoing observations. During the Viceroyalty of Lord

<sup>1</sup> Chapter XXIV

Duflerrn arrangements were made with several of the native states, possessing specially good fighting material, for maintaining a number of selected troops in such a condition of efficiency in arms, equipment, drill, and organisation, as should make them fit to take the field side by side with British soldiers. Other states have undertaken to maintain transport corps, which have already proved most useful in time of war. The total number of these special contingents, or, as they are called, Imperial Service troops, is now about 18,000 men. Both officers and men are, for the most part, natives of the states to which they belong, but British officers are appointed to inspect them, and to advise in regard to their training and equipment. The Kashmir Imperial Service troops saw active service in the operations for the reduction of the mountain principalities of Hunza and Nagar, and behaved with conspicuous gallantry. Since then in the Tirah and other campaigns on the north-western frontier, and more recently in China, contingents from other states have proved themselves a valuable, keen, and loyal addition to our regular troops.

#### NOTE TO CHAPTER XXIII

##### THE ABOLITION OF THE MILITARY MEMBER IN THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S COUNCIL. (Page 490)

The change in the administration of military business in the Government of India, which the abolition of the military member and the military department implied, formed at the time the subject of acute controversy and was the direct cause of Lord Curzon's resignation of the office of Viceroy. Up to 1905, when this change took place, one of the ordinary members of the Governor-General's Council was a military officer of high rank and experience. The Commander-in-Chief usually, though not invariably, was also on the Council as an 'extraordinary'

member The Governor-General in Council had thus the opinions and advice of two military experts, of whom one usually belonged to the Indian army and the other to the British army The Commander-in-Chief, as the executive head of the army, had his army headquarters staff, of whom the chief officers were the Adjutant-General and the Quarter-master-General Proposals on military matters requiring the orders of the Governor-General in Council were drawn up by the army headquarters staff under the instructions of the Commander-in-Chief, and were transmitted to the Government of India in the military department There they were considered, and eventually were submitted by the secretary to the Government of India in that department to the Governor-General in Council Under the departmental system introduced by Lord Canning for the disposal of business in the Government of India, the military department fell to the special charge of the military member In many cases he passed orders which ran in the name of the Governor-General in Council, and in the more important cases on which a decision of the Council was required, his opinion as the member in charge of the military department naturally carried special weight If he did not agree with a proposal emanating from army headquarters, the Commander-in-Chief, having a seat in the Council as an extraordinary member, could support his own views there in debate, but he would be aware all the time that he had the 'department' against him The system had the advantage that it secured the examination of every important military question by two high military authorities, and by two public offices inspired by different traditions It also emphasised the fact that the supreme control of the army rested with the civil power, namely, the Governor-General in Council But it was at all times liable to produce friction, and the friction at times became great Its critics also accused it of duplicating work, causing delay, and creating much unnecessary correspondence From time to time schemes to mend or end it were proposed, but came to nothing In 1879 the Army Organisation Commission recommended that the Commander-in-Chief should cease to sit on the Council They considered his presence there to be contrary to all principles of sound administration, and to place him in fundamentally false relations with the Governor General and the military member In the following year Lord Lytton, while agreeing with the Commission that a change was necessary, disagreed with them as to the remedy He considered that the Commander-in-Chief should himself be the military member, and *the only military member* of the Viceroy's Council "In him alone, as in the war minister of every country not governed by parliamentary institutions, should be united and concentrated the executive and administrative control of the army" In 1888 Lord

Dufferin, having to consider the subject, expressed in strong terms his preference for the retention of the military member. He did not think that the so-called 'dual military government' was harmful to progress, and believed that it was a security against rash innovations. There the question rested, so far as the Government of India was concerned, until it was again roused by Lord Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief in India, and was referred by the Government of India to the home Government for decision. The decision was conveyed in a despatch dated May 31, 1905, addressed by Mr Brodrick, as Secretary of State for India, to the Governor General in Council. The ministry decided that it was undesirable "that in the future there should be two officers appointed to the Viceroy's Council for the purpose of giving expert opinions on military questions, or that there should be two departments under the Government of India equipped for the purpose of dealing with purely military problems." They proposed, therefore, to distinguish between "the purely military services which should be controlled by the Commander in Chief, and the services of supply and manufacture." The latter services were to be placed under a department in the Government of India to be called the 'military supply department,' and the 'military member' was to be replaced by a 'military supply member.' The military supply member was to be a military officer, but his functions would be essentially those of a civilian administrator with military knowledge and experience. Neither he nor his department was to record criticisms on the purely military proposals of the Commander-in-Chief. It was to be their business within the limits of finance to assist the Commander-in-Chief in the business of army supply. All other army business in the Government of India was to be transacted in a new department, to be called 'the army department,' which would take the place of the 'military department.' The secretary of the army department would, like other secretaries to the Government of India, be responsible to the Governor General in Council, and would have direct access to the Viceroy. But the new department was to be under the charge of the Commander-in-Chief, in his capacity of member of Council, and he would represent it in Council. In this way the Commander-in-Chief was to be enabled to submit his schemes direct to the Governor-General in Council. They would first be worked out by the army headquarters staff, and then passed over to the army department of the Government of India, where the secretary of the department would prepare the case for submission to Council. To give the Commander-in-Chief relief in his executive duties a third chief officer, with the title of Chief of the Staff, was added to the army headquarters.

It fell to Lord Morley, in succeeding Mr Brodrick at the India Office, to settle the actual rules of business which gave effect to this administrative change. This was done in a despatch of February 9, 1906, addressed by him to the Governor-General in Council. The despatch mentioned that the new Government had decided not to reopen the settlement which its predecessor had made, but to terminate the controversy and deadlock as speedily as possible. The chief question still outstanding was as to the position and duties of the secretary in the new 'army' department. Was he to be responsible solely to the Governor-General in Council like the other secretaries to the Government of India, and the sole channel for the submission of army business to that Government? Or was he and his office to be merged more or less completely with the army headquarters staff, and thereby subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief? The advocates of civil control insisted on the first alternative, and their view was accepted by Lord Morley. "If the supremacy of the civil government," it was said in the despatch, "is to be real and effectual, and if the Governor-General in Council is to be in a position to fulfil the duty cast upon him by the statute of 1833, of superintending, directing, and controlling military affairs in India, then it is necessary that the secretary to the Government of India in the army department should have status, powers, duties, and responsibilities precisely similar to those of secretaries to the Government of India in the other departments." The rules of business were accordingly framed so as to secure the independence of the Government of India's representative in the new department, and thus guarantee that the Governor-General would always have competent information and counsel.

In other respects care was taken to assert the control of the Governor-General in Council and to keep the government informed on army affairs. The military finance and accounts were taken over by the Finance Department of the Government of India, and placed under civilian control in the person of a secretary to the Government of India in charge of the 'army finance branch'. An advisory committee to the Commander-in-Chief was constituted, and on it, as well as on the mobilisation committee, the Governor-General in Council was represented by the secretary in the army department.

In 1909, as the result of three years' experience of the new system, it was decided to abolish the 'military supply' department and the appointment of 'military supply' member in the Governor-General's Council. There was a consensus of opinion that a separate 'supply' department was administratively not needed, as its duties could be distributed without difficulty between the army department and the

army headquarters staff, and that as a constitutional safeguard it was valueless. The Commander in Chief is now, in his capacity of extraordinary member of the Council, in charge of all army business in the Government of India, and the sole military expert on the Council.

There is no finality, as has been well said, in administrative arrangements of this kind. It is possible that the new system of military administration in the Government of India may hereafter be found defective, and may be brought under revision. As to how it has so far worked, the statement made by Lord Minto in the Legislative Council in Calcutta on the 29th March 1909 may be quoted. After mentioning that with the abolition of the 'supply' department "the last traces of dual military control and dual advice to the Viceroy" would disappear, Lord Minto continued: "I have no intention of going over the weary arguments for or against a system which has now become obsolete, but it may not be out of place for me to say a few words on the one really vital question affecting a prolonged dispute. Will the new system of army administration ensure for the Government of India the necessary constitutional control over the Commander-in-Chief? I unhesitatingly assert, after an experience of some years of the results of the transfer to the Commander-in-Chief of the powers and much of the work of the military member, that the change of system, whilst giving him wider administrative authority, has materially detracted from his independence of action. I can understand the apprehensions of my predecessors as to their want of control over him, for though the proposals of a Commander-in-Chief may often have been checked by the interference of the military member, he was in many matters free to act on his own initiative, there was no direct channel of communication whatever between him and the Viceroy, and there was no secretary to Government who was answerable to the Viceroy for a clear explanation of the Commander-in-Chief's views. The post of secretary to the army department will now always be held by a distinguished general officer, on the same footing as a secretary to government in every other department—fully entitled to differ from the head of his department, and with free access to the Viceroy."

'Again as to military finance,—for the careful supervision of which we have to thank Lord Kitchener,—a full acquaintance with any extravagant expenditure proposed by a Commander-in-Chief is much more directly and promptly available to the Viceroy and the Government of India than in the days of the military member, for the secretary to the military branch of the finance department is joint-secretary to the finance department itself, with the same access to the Viceroy and the same powers as any other secretary to government. I believe, therefore,

that the higher administration of the army has now been placed on a constitutionally safe and thoroughly sound footing, and that the Government of India will do wisely in following Lord Kitchener's advice to safeguard the continuity of that military policy which he has done so much to inaugurate."

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE NATIVE STATES

Area, population, and revenue of Native States—Meaning of the term Native States—Prevalent mistakes—Native States not nationalities—Different classes of Native States—Muhammadian and Maratha States—Their foreign character—Ancient dynasties preserved by the British—The Governments of Native States—The personal despots—The tribal chiefs—The supremacy of the British Government—Our relations with Native States—The doctrine of lapse—Right of adoption—Assumption by Queen Victoria of title of "Empress of India"—The Coronation Durbar of January, 1903—The character of Native rulers—Frequent necessity for British intervention—The annexation of Oudh—Condition of Oudh before annexation—Deposition of the Gaikwar—The States of Central India—Desire of the British Government to maintain the Native States—Their misrule their sole danger—The conditions essential to their preservation—The restoration of Mysore to Native rule—Improvements in the administration of Native States—Colleges for the education of Native chiefs—The Imperial Cadet Corps

THE Native States of India cover an area of 686,000 square miles, and contain a population of 62,500,000. Their total revenues are estimated at about £15,000,000. Counting them all, there are nearly 700 of them, but the great majority are so insignificant in extent, and their rulers have so little authority, that they do not deserve the name of States. The largest, that of the Nizam of Haiderabad, has an area of 83,000 square miles, and a population of more than 11,000,000, Gwalior, 25,000 square miles, and a population of 3,000,000,



Mysore, 29,000 square miles, and 5,500,000. Several others have between 1,000,000 and 3,000,000 people<sup>1</sup>

Excepting the Himālayan state of Nepāl, which since 1815 has been enabled by its geographical position to maintain a constant attitude of complete but friendly isolation, no native state within the limits of India has any real independence, but, subject to this general fact, their rulers have every degree of power and importance, from the petty chief with little or no political authority, to princes with large revenues and considerable armies, with whose internal administration, under ordinary circumstances, we hardly interfere.

I am obliged to use the term 'native state,' but this expression only signifies a state not directly administered by Englishmen. The rulers of some of the principal native states of India are almost as much foreigners to the people whom they govern as we are ourselves. The term 'native states' is apt to convey the idea that they are Indian nationalities existing in the midst of our great foreign dominion. This, indeed,

<sup>1</sup> The following list shows the area, population, and approximate revenue of the principal native states —

	Square miles	Population	Approximate revenue.	Religion of ruler
Hyderabad (The Nizam)	82,700	11,141,000	£2,400,000	Muhammadan
Bhopal	8,900	866,000	200,000	"
Bahawalpur	15,000	720,000	180,000	"
Gwalior (Sindhia)	25,000	3,000,000	1,090,000	Hindu
Indore. (Holkar)	9,500	851,000	480,000	"
Baroda (Gaikwar)	8,100	1,950,000	820,000	"
Mysore	29,400	5,539,000	1,270,000	"
Travancore	7,100	2,950,000	666,000	"
Jaipur	15,500	2,700,000	410,000	"
Jodhpur	35,000	2,000,000	370,000	"
Udaipur	12,700	1,000,000	244,000	"
Bikanir	23,300	584,000	150,000	"
Rewah	13,000	1,320,000	190,000	"
Kutch	7,600	450,000	131,000	"
Patiala	5,400	1,597,000	380,000	Sikh
Kashmir	80,900	2,906,000	580,000	Hindu

is the popular English belief. It is assumed that in our conquest of India we imposed our rule on peoples who had previously been governed by princes of their own race, that we took the place of ancient native dynasties which we destroyed, and that, having kept for ourselves the more valuable provinces, we have, for one reason or another, allowed some portions of India to retain their native governments. No suppositions could be more contrary to fact. When, after the death of Aurangzib in 1707, the Mughal empire was breaking up, a scramble ensued for the fragments, and this lasted through the greater part of the eighteenth and the earlier part of the nineteenth century. The chief competitors during the struggle were the Maráthas, the Muhammadan powers of southern India, and the English. The larger share of the gain fell to the English, but the other competitors had no better titles than our own. All alike were foreigners in the countries for which they were contending.

Those who desire to learn the truth on this subject should read Sir Alfred Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*, to which I have often referred, and Professor Seeley's *Expansion of England*.

"One of the popular notions in England and Europe (I am quoting from Sir Alfred Lyall) regarding the establishment of the English empire in India, is that our conquests absorbed nationalities, displaced long-seated dynasties, and levelled ancient nobilities. These are some of the self-accusations by which the average home-keeping Englishman justifies to himself the indulgence of sitting down and casting dust on his head whenever he looks back upon the exploits of his countrymen in India—an attitude which is observed by foreigners with suspicion or impatience according to their insight into English character. Yet it would be easy to prove that one important reason why the English so rapidly conquered India was this, that the countries

which fell into our hands had no nationalities, no long-seated ruling dynasties or ancient aristocracies, that they had, in fact, no solid or permanent organisation of the kind, but were, politically, treasure trove, at the disposal of the first who, having found, could keep. The best proof that in these countries the English destroyed no organised political institutions is the historical fact that in the countries which they annexed none such had been left for them to destroy. On the other hand, where indigenous political institutions of long standing still exist, it is the English who have saved them from destruction"<sup>1</sup>

The principal native states of India may be roughly divided into two classes. The most important of the first class are the Muhammadian state of Hyderabad and the Maráthá states of Gwalior, Indore, and Baroda. They survived the struggles of the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, and their chiefs are in all cases foreigners to the people under their rule. None of these states are much older than our own dominion, the principal officials are usually as foreign as the chiefs, the armed force mainly consists of foreign mercenaries, and there is little more sympathy between the people and their rulers than that which exists in British territories. I have repeatedly pointed out how misleading are such terms as 'natives of India,' 'people of India,' and other general expressions, and this warning is especially necessary in regard to the 'native states'. It can never be assumed that because the chief of a native state is a so-called 'native of India' he has rights essentially differing in kind from our own. If a question arises whether our own administration or that of a native ruler is to be preferred, Englishmen usually suppose that the choice must lie between giving to the people the foreign government of the English or the national government

<sup>1</sup> *Asiatic Studies*, p. 181

of their own countrymen For instance, there was much discussion some time ago whether we ought to restore to the Nizam the districts of Berár which had been assigned to us, and which have been for many years under British administration Few had any suspicion of the fact that the Muhammadan Government of Haiderabad would be almost as foreign as our own to the people of Berár, who are Hindus having nothing in common with their former rulers

The Nizam holds the first place among the native princes of India The founder of the ruling family was one of Aurangzib's viceroys, in 1724 he was virtually independent Nearly the whole population is Hindu, but although at the present time (1910) a Hindu is the chief minister of the state, Hindus have usually had little or no share in the administration everything has been in the hands of Muhammadan foreigners The army chiefly consists of foreign mercenaries The Haiderabad state is the chief surviving relic of Muhammadan supremacy in India. With the not very important exceptions of Bhopál and Baháwalpur, the latter of which states had, however, a more autonomous and legitimate origin, the other states under Muhammadan rulers, about twenty in number, are politically insignificant The population of the so-called Muhammadan states is altogether about 14,000,000, but of this number at least 12,000,000 are Hindus Even in Haiderabad, where the Muhammadans have been in power for centuries, they form less than a tenth part of the population A very small proportion of the 62,500,000 Muhammadans of India live under rulers of their own faith; by far the greater number of them are our own subjects

The principal remnants of the Marátha power are

the three states of Gwalior, Indore, and Baroda, and of these Gwalior, under the rule of Sindhia, is the most important. They all came into existence about the middle of the eighteenth century. Their chiefs are entirely foreign to the people. In the words of Sir Lepel Griffin, they are "the representatives of the predatory hordes which, until crushed by British arms, turned the fertile plains of Central India into a wilderness. These Marátha dynasties have nothing in common with the people they govern. Their race is different and their language is not understood." The population of the three Marátha states is nearly 6,000,000, but, except the rulers and their followers, there are no Maráthas.

Among the more important of the native states of which I have been speaking, there is not one the government of which can be said to have a more legitimate or national origin than that of the British Government itself in its Indian dominions.

I come now to the second of the classes into which the native states of India may be divided. Judged by their area and population and political importance, these states are inferior to those of the former class, but they are more numerous and far more interesting. They are the only parts of India where ancient political institutions and ancient dynasties still survive, and their preservation is entirely due to the British Government. The principal states of this class are those of Rájputána, and there are many others in Central India, in Bundelkhand, Baghelkhand, and in the Bombay Presidency. In his *Asiatic Studies* Sir Alfred Lyall has described the states of Rájputána, the most interesting of the whole. They were saved by the British Government from destruction by the Maráthas. They are twenty in number, with an area of some 130,000 square miles and

a population of nearly 12,000,000 The constitution of these states is very different from that of the Muhammadan and Marátha states In the latter the ruler formerly exercised absolute personal power, and he is still an absolute ruler, though his power in some respects is now limited by his responsibilities to the British Government Historically Scindia (I am quoting from Sir Alfred Lyall), the head of the Marátha state of Gwalior, "is the representative of the single family of a successful captain of armies who annexed in the last century all the territory he could lay hands on, and whose son finally encamped so long in one place that his camp grew into his capital some sixty years ago He is a despot of the ordinary Asiatic species, ruling absolutely the lands which his ancestor seized by the power of a mercenary army" <sup>1</sup>

In states like those of Rájputána, on the other hand, where ancient institutions have been preserved, the constitution of the governing authority is very different The chief is the hereditary head of a military clan the members of which have been for centuries lords of the soil. He and the minor chiefs and nobles are supposed to be descended from a common ancestor, he is *primus inter pares*, and while all the branches of the original stock are ready to join their chief in time of danger, his actual power over them is, under ordinary circumstances, very greatly limited

Owing to the custom of adoption, through which no Hindu family need become extinct from failure of heirs, some of the ruling families of Rájputána go back to an unknown antiquity In the states of Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Jaipur, there seems no reason to doubt that the families to which the present chiefs belong have ruled

<sup>1</sup> *Asiatic Studies*, p 196

in the same territories for more than a thousand years. In states of this kind there is often a strong feeling of attachment on the part of the people towards their chief.

There are other states of a different character which have nothing in common with those which I have last mentioned, except that they owe their present existence to the British Government. The largest of these is the frontier state of Kashmir, with an area of 81,000 square miles, and a population of 2,900,000. It was given by Lord Hardinge to Ghulab Singh in 1846, after the first Sikh war. The treaty under which the grant was made declares the supremacy of the British Government, and a nominal tribute is paid every year by the Máharája.

Mysore, in southern India, has an area of 29,000 square miles and a population of 5,500,000. Its Hindu rajas contrived to maintain more or less independence until the middle of the eighteenth century, when Hyder Ali took possession of their country. It remained in his hands and in those of his successor, Tippoo Sultan, until the capture of Seringapatam by the English in 1799. Mysore was then restored by Lord Wellesley to the old Hindu dynasty. In consequence of gross oppression and misgovernment, it became necessary in 1830 to place British officers in charge of the administration. The Rája died in 1867, leaving an adopted son, and the British Government announced its intention of restoring the government to the heir when he reached his majority. This promise was carried out in 1881 in a manner which I shall presently notice.

The ancient Hindu state of Travancore, at the southern extremity of India, was rescued from Tippoo by the British, and still remains in the possession of its rajas.

The principal native states of the Punjab also owe

their continued existence to English protection Without it they would have been utterly swept away by Ranjit Singh There are altogether thirty-four of these states, with a population of more than 4,000,000

The supreme authority of the British Government has become a fact which no native state in India thinks for a moment of disputing These states are often called 'feudatory,' but there is no analogy between their relations with the British Government and the incidents of ancient feudal tenure The expression has come into use, as Sir Charles Aitchison says, "merely from want of a better or more convenient term to denote the subordination of territorial sovereignties to a common superior, combined with the obligation to discharge certain duties and render certain services to that superior"

In the case of the more important states, our supremacy was long ago recognised, more or less completely, by treaty, in the case of the smaller states, whether expressed and formally recorded or not, it has become one of the obvious conditions of their existence Some of the states, so far as their internal administration is concerned, are substantially independent, unless their government becomes so scandalously bad and oppressive that intervention is forced upon us, in other states the authority of the chiefs is more strictly limited, in many of the smaller states it hardly exists in any independent form But whether the state be great or small, there are certain rights which the paramount power always asserts. No native state can have any political communication with any other native state, or with any foreign power, without the consent of the British Government, no native state can maintain more troops or military establishments than are required



for purposes of internal administration, for the support of the reasonable dignity of the chief, or except in accordance with its recognised obligations towards the British Government, there is no native state in which civil war would be permitted, or in which, in case of gross and systematic injustice and tyranny, the British Government would not interfere for the protection of the people. This last right is the necessary consequence of our absolute power, and it has been repeatedly exercised. There is no native chief who might not be tried and punished for a crime of special atrocity by a tribunal constituted by the British Government. It will be understood from all this that rules of international law which govern the relations between independent states cannot apply to the relations between the British Government and the native states of India.

There is no dynasty in India which would not, without the custom of adoption, long ago have become extinct. It may also be said that it is the rule, as much as the exception, that a native prince has no direct heirs. I need not dwell on the significance of this fact.

Whether an adopted son had the same right as a natural heir to succeed to the government of a state without the sanction of the paramount power was a question in regard to which there had been no uniform custom or practice before the time of Lord Dalhousie. He laid down the broad principle that while we were "bound in duty as well as in policy to act on every such occasion with the purest integrity and in the most scrupulous observance of good faith," it was right that "on all occasions where heirs natural shall fail, the territory should be made to lapse, and adoption should not be permitted, excepting in those cases in which



patches of native government served as a breakwater to the storm which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave" With hardly an exception, they remained faithful in circumstances of the severest trial and difficulty Before Lord Canning left India a *sanad* was issued to each of the principal Hindu chiefs, assuring him, in the name of the Queen, that, on failure of natural heirs, the British Government would recognise any adoption of a successor made by himself or by any future chief of the state, in accordance with Hindu law or the customs of his race The Muhammadan chiefs received assurances that every form of succession allowed by Muhammadan law to be legitimate would be recognised by our Government From the principle thus laid down there has been no departure In default of regular adoption, the British Government exercises the undisputed right of selecting the successor whom it may think most fit In case of a minority, it invariably asserts a right of interference, limited only by its own sense of what is proper

The supremacy of the British Government over all the native states in India was declared in 1877, in a more emphatic form than it had received before, by the assumption by Queen Victoria of the title of *Kaisar-i-Hind*, Empress of India

When, in 1876, Mr Disraeli proposed that the Queen should assume this new title, there were no limits to the scorn with which the suggestion was received by his opponents, and it may be doubted whether he found much real sympathy from a majority of those who felt bound to support him But he possessed that gift without which, as he said to me himself, no statesman can be truly great—the gift of imagination "Touch and satisfy," he said in the House of Commons, "the

imagination of nations, for that is an element which no government can despise. This will be an act which will add splendour to the throne of the Queen, and will add security to her empire." His conviction of the power which imagination exercises on the minds of men, and especially of orientals, was fully shared by Lord Lytton, who was then Viceroy, and its truth has, in this case, received ample proof.

No such gathering of chiefs and princes had been seen in India, in historical times, as that of January 1877 at Delhi, when, with a pomp such as the East alone can show, all the great chiefs of the native states of India came to make the formal acknowledgment of their dependence on the British Empress. The 1st of January 1903 saw repeated at Delhi, on a far grander scale and with far greater splendour than that of 1877, the assemblage of ruling chiefs and nobles from all the states and provinces of India, representatives, some of them, of countries as far apart as Iceland from Constantinople, summoned by Lord Curzon to celebrate the coronation of Edward the Seventh as King and Emperor. No spectacle so magnificent can have been seen in Europe since the triumphs of ancient Rome, and it may be doubted whether, when Aurelian passed through the city with Zenobia and the spoils of Palmyra, and "the arms and ensigns of conquered nations," Rome itself witnessed a more splendid pageant than when the British Viceroy entered Delhi with the brother of the Emperor, or when he afterwards received in solemn *durbar* the homage of the princes of India. The time has passed in which it was necessary to defend the policy of the measure which proclaimed the paramount sovereignty of the British Crown. No Indian statesman doubts its wisdom or the profound practical

importance of its political results. It has given to the British power a position different from that which it held before; it has swept away old jealousies that were not extinct, and has made more loyal the ruler of every native state in India. Not many years ago it would have been difficult to believe that we should see in London great Rájput princes who, to prove their loyalty, had thrown aside the prejudices of caste and immemorial custom, and that Sindhia, the descendant of Marátha chiefs, who had fought with us for supremacy in India, and was now ruling one of its most important states, would be proud to ride as aide-camp at the coronation of the King and Emperor. The Emperor of India has become to its chiefs and people a great and real personality, in place of "the impersonal power of an administrative abstraction" <sup>1</sup>

There has been, but only in recent years, a marked and satisfactory improvement in the administration of the native states. To this I shall refer again, but as late as 1883, Sir Lepel Griffin, than whom no one could at that time speak with greater personal knowledge, declared that, although there were many honourable exceptions, the native states of India were in the most part "a wilderness of oppression and misrule." This conclusion was that of all those most competent to judge, and it was certainly my own.

I think it useful to refer to the former condition of some of these states, because it cannot be doubted that if the vigilance of the British Government were relaxed, that condition would often become no better than it was not long ago. It is to our intervention before misrule became altogether insufferable that many of these states owe their continued existence

<sup>1</sup> *History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*, by Lady Betty Balfour

Without going back to more distant times, when all conditions were different, if we examine the history of the principal native states during the greater part of the latter half of the last century, we can hardly find a single case in which the record was one of uninterrupted tranquillity and fairly good administration. From time to time there was a just and benevolent chief, but sooner or later came almost always the same story; our interference for the protection of the people against their ruler became inevitable. Even within the last few years it has sometimes become necessary for the British Government to assume the administration of the state, and on several occasions the chief has been deposed because he was guilty of atrocious crimes.

I will give some instances in which interference has been inevitable, and as the first of them I will take the annexation of Oudh. Although this is now an old story, for the native government ceased to exist in 1856, it is still an instructive example of what has happened in a time not very distant, and I wish to refer to it for another reason. We still sometimes hear the annexation of Oudh quoted as one of the iniquitous proceedings of the British Government, and as an illustration of its lust of dominion.

General Sleeman, the representative of our government in Oudh, gave from personal observation a description of the country at that time, and its accuracy has never been called in question. I will give some account, often in his own words, of his report.

Oudh is naturally one of the richest countries in India, as large as Holland and Belgium together, with a population at the present time of nearly 13,000,000. Government in Oudh, deserving the name, there was

none The King did not pretend to concern himself with any public business His ambition was limited to that of being reputed the best drum-beater, dancer, and poet of the day. Sometimes he might be seen going in procession through the streets of Lucknow, beating the drum tied round his neck Singers, fiddlers, poets, eunuchs, and women were his only associates The prime minister, 'a consummate knave,' after keeping an enormous share for himself and his creatures, distributed the revenues and patronage of the country The fiddlers controlled the administration of civil justice, that of criminal justice was made over to the eunuchs, each of the King's favourites had authority over some court or office through which he might make a fortune for himself. The minister kept the land revenue, and "employed none but knaves of the very worst kind in all branches of the administration" Every office was sold, commands in the army were put up to auction every season, or oftener, and the purchase money was divided among the minister, the singers, the fiddlers, and the eunuchs The principal singer had two regiments at his disposal The minister was as inaccessible as the King himself Petitions and reports were usually made over by him, if he gave any orders at all, to the commander-in-chief, who was an infant, to the King's chamberlain, or footman, or coachman, chief fiddler, eunuch, barber, or any person uppermost in his thoughts at the time Courts of justice were unknown, except as affording means of extortion to the judges The charge of the so-called police throughout the country was sold to the highest bidders There was only one road that deserved the name in Oudh, made for the benefit of English travellers from Lucknow to Cawnpore, a distance of about forty miles

The atrocities that went on throughout the country would pass belief, if the evidence of the truth were less complete. I will give a few illustrations, taken from General Sleeman's narrative

The districts of Bahraich and Gonda have an area of more than 5000 square miles, and they now contain more than 2,000,000 inhabitants. Shortly before General Sleeman's visit, a man called Raghubai Singh was their local governor, with large bodies of the King's troops and of his own armed retainers at his disposal. In two years his extortions and crimes had reached such a point that these districts, which had once been in a flourishing condition, and noted for their fertility, had become for the most part uncultivated. The English officer deputed by the resident to inquire into the facts reported that "villages completely deserted in the midst of lands devoid of all tillage everywhere meet the eye; and from Fyzabad to Bahraich he passed through these districts, a distance of eighty miles, over plains which had been fertile and well cultivated till Raghubar Singh got charge, but now lay entirely waste, a scene for two years of great misery, ending in desolation."

The Rájá of Bondi was one of the principal landholders in this part of Oudh, his estates contained some three hundred villages. He objected to the extortionate demands of Raghubar Singh, and this was the consequence. Parties of soldiers were sent out to plunder and seize all the respectable residents they could find. They sacked the town of Bondi, pulled down the houses of the Rájá, and those of his relations and dependants, and, after looting all the towns and villages in the neighbourhood, they brought in 1000 captives of both sexes and all ages, who were subjected to every sort of outrage until they paid the ransom demanded. The



escaped, but his agents and tenants were horribly  
ured. Soon afterwards, detachments of soldiers were  
n sent out to plunder; 1500 men and 500 women  
children were brought in as prisoners, with 80,000  
nals. All were driven off pell-mell through the rain  
three days. The women were driven on by the  
ps with the butt-ends of their muskets; many of  
children were trodden to death. The prisoners were  
up and flogged and tortured, red-hot ramrods thrust  
their flesh, their tongues pulled out with hot pincers  
y perished from torture and starvation. The women  
children were all stripped of their clothing. For  
months these atrocities continued. Similar horrors  
t on in other parts of Bahraich, and twenty years  
r the English officer in charge of that district re-  
ed that its population would at that time have  
oubtedly been much larger but for the former  
cities of Raghubar Singh. General Sleeman tells us  
; no single person concerned in these crimes was ever  
ished.

There were then in Oudh 250 forts in the possession  
he great landholders, with 100,000 men, maintained  
ight among themselves, or against the Government.  
eral Sleeman's two volumes are filled with descrip-  
s of the enormities that were going on, almost under  
own eyes, of open war, of villages attacked and  
dered, of horrible murders and outrages. "Every  
," he writes, "I have scores of petitions delivered to  
by persons who have been plundered of all they  
essed, had their dearest relations murdered or tor-  
ed to death, and their habitations burnt to the  
and by gangs of ruffians, under landlords of high  
h and pretensions, whom they had never wronged

or offended In these attacks neither age, nor sex, nor condition are spared "

In General Sleeman's narrative I have found hardly anything to relieve the uniformity of his terrible story except this —

"In the most crowded streets of Lucknow, Europeans are received with deference, courtesy, and kindness The people of the country respect the British Government, its officers, and Europeans generally Though the resident has not been able to secure any very substantial or permanent reform in the administration, still he has often interposed with effect, in individual cases, to relieve suffering and secure redress for grievous wrongs The people of the country see that he never interposes except for such purposes, and their only regret is that he interposes so seldom, and that his efforts when he does so should be so often frustrated or disregarded In the remotest village or jungle in Oudh, as in the most crowded streets of the capital, a European gentleman is sure to be treated with affectionate respect, and the humblest European is as sure to receive protection and kindness, unless he forfeits all claim to it by his misconduct."

For many years one Governor-General after another had gone on protesting against the atrocities of which some illustrations have been given At last came 'the great proconsul' Dalhousie He knew that since the British Government, without moving a soldier or spending a rupee, had absolute power to put an immediate end to these abominations, it was on the British Government that the responsibility really rested for suffering them to continue There was only one complete remedy, and Lord Dalhousie applied it by declaring the whole of Oudh to be British territory I find one defect only in his most wise and righteous action, he was too merciful to the miserable King and to the demons who had been destroying one of the most populous and fertile countries of India There could be no greater contrast than that

presented by Oudh under native and under British government it is now as peaceful as any part of England, life and property are safe, and justice is honestly administered

For atrocities committed on a vast scale the case of Oudh stands alone, but I will give a few illustrations of the condition into which some of the native states have fallen in much later times, and which have rendered the interference of our Government inevitable

Baroda is the principal native state of western India. It covers 8100 square miles, and has a population of nearly 2,000,000. Its ruler, the Gaikwár, claims precedence over all the native chiefs of India. In 1863 Malhár Ráo was imprisoned on a charge of having attempted the life of the Gaikwár, his brother, at the end of 1870, on his brother's death, he was released, and he assumed the government of the state. Before long his proceedings had become so scandalous that the British Government was compelled to make a formal inquiry into his administration. It was shown that general discontent prevailed through his dominions, in one district there was open rebellion, public offices were sold to the highest bidder, payment of extortionate demands of revenue was compelled by torture, respectable women were seized in open day in the streets of Baroda by the Gaikwár's servants, and taken to the palace to be converted into household slaves or worse, the condition of the agricultural classes was desperate, and the whole administration was infamous. The prime minister was forcibly poisoned in prison, and it was hardly possible to doubt that this was done under the direct orders of the Gaikwár. It was proved that, for an act by which he had been personally offended, the

Gaikwár had caused one of his servants, without any trial, to be tortured to death

In 1874 he was informed by the Government of India, Lord Northbrook being Viceroy at the time, that, if immediate and satisfactory reforms were not carried out in the administration of the state, his deposition would follow. He showed no inclination to alter his conduct. Soon afterwards an attempt was made to poison the British resident at his court, and there was every reason to believe that the Gaikwár had personally instigated the crime. A commission, of which the chief justice of Bengal was president, and of which the rulers of two of the principal native states were members, was appointed for his trial. The native chiefs pronounced that the charges were not proved, but the chief justice and the English members found that he was guilty, and there was not the least doubt that they were right. As the judgment was not unanimous, the Gaikwár escaped the extreme penalty that he deserved, and which, if he had been formally convicted, he would probably have suffered. He was deposed, and a member of another branch of the Gaikwár's house was selected by the British Government as his successor. When the rule of Malhár Ráo ended, it was found that out of an expenditure in his last year of £1,700,000, which was greatly in excess of the revenue, he had squandered £700,000 in gifts to favourites and on his personal pleasures, and £200 remained in the public treasury.

The two important Marátha states of Central India, Gwalior and Indore, ruled respectively by Sindhia and Holkar, have together an area of more than 33,000 square miles, and a population of nearly 4,000,000. I make the following quotations from an official report

for 1885 by Sir Lepel Griffin, Agent to the Governor-General in Central India —

"The largest states in this agency, Gwalior and Indore, are those in which the rulers spend the least on administration, and most neglect all those requirements which we specially associate with progress and civilisation. Those districts that are under the direct control of Sindhia's officials give little cause for trouble or complaint to the Government, although the administration is lax and apathetic. Those, however, which are given in jagir to his great courtiers are constant sources of anxiety. Neglected by the grantees, who reside at the capital, they are made over to rack-renting agents, who support their authority by Afghán and Mokrání mercenaries, who are the scourge of the country-side. Damodar Panth, the agent of one of the principal nobles of the Máharája, has long been notorious for his open encouragement and support of crime in his master's jagir. Having sufficient proof of his complicity in numerous cases of dacoity and robbery, I have, with the full consent of the Máharája, caused his arrest, and he is now being tried on these serious charges, while the bands of dacoits, which had been allowed with impunity to plunder that part of Málwa, are being broken up. During 1883-84 the oppression exercised in Indore city called for the severest condemnation on the part of the Government of India, and the senior Prince Shivaji Ráo Holkar was specially censured and removed from all concern with public business. I have had during the past year to remonstrate with the durbár on many occasions and in strong terms against action which appeared to me to have been taken against individuals unjustly, and in defiance of the commonest principles of justice and equity. The judicial administration of Indore must be held to be deteriorating and not improving. The reforms instituted by Sir Mádhava Ráo are being gradually abandoned from motives of false economy.

If I am unable to say much that is good of the two great Mahratta states included in Central India, this is no matter for surprise. In the Rájput states which abound in Central India, and which are rather oligarchical than autocratic, there is on the part of the chiefs a far more kindly and unselfish attitude towards the brotherhood and the people generally than in a Mahratta state, the despotic egoism of which is fatal to all progress and

civilisation The ruler considers the soil of the state as his own, the people are his slaves, the entire revenue is his private pocket-money, to hoard, lavish, or waste, without any right of remonstrance or complaint on the part of his subjects The disease of such governments is chronic and intolerable. It is impossible that they can be other than evil, and it is a false and foolish policy to use towards them the language of false compliment, and to pretend that they are other than irretrievably bad, until a higher civilisation and the example of the British Government shall have demonstrated that the rights of princes have no existence apart from the rights of the people "

In another paper, also referring to the states of Central India, Sir Lepel Griffin wrote as follows —

"The peasants are little better than serfs The importation of foreign slaves is prevented by the vigilance of the British authorities alone Torture is a recognised part of judicial and police procedure. Only a few months ago I was compelled to refuse to return the visit of a ruling chief who was openly accused of squeezing the juice of chillies into the eyes of recusant witnesses He was an old gentleman of the most soft and courteous manners, and the idea that chillies could be objected to as a means of judicial investigation did not appear to have occurred to him

Administration of justice has virtually no existence, a bribe procures the acquittal, or escape, or release of a criminal Every offence can usually be compounded for money Numerous boundary disputes between native states come before me, and the consideration which governs every case is that both states have, as a matter of course, supported a wilfully exaggerated claim by perjured witnesses and forged documents One of the first chiefs in India punishes and ruins the headman or cultivator of a village who may give truthful evidence contrary to any boundary claim the state has chosen unjustly to advance The actual demand of the Government per head of the population is double, treble, or quadruple what it is in British India "

Speaking of Kashmir with personal knowledge, Sir Lepel Griffin said in 1883 that "nothing escapes taxation, and bare life is all that the state leaves to the cultivator, whose position is harder and as hopeless as

that of a slave " The shameful maladministration of this state was too long tolerated, but at last, in 1889, the patience of the British Government was exhausted. The Máharája was for a time deprived of all authority, and although he was subsequently allowed to resume his position as head of the state, it was under new conditions, the administration being carried on by a council of state, acting under the advice of the British resident.

In 1884 the condition of Bhopál, a state with nearly 1,000,000 inhabitants, became such that it was necessary for the Government of India to remove the husband of the reigning princess from power, and to appoint an English minister to carry on the administration. The land revenue had been arbitrarily raised from £170,000 to £410,000, the payment of more than £1,000,000 was demanded in a lump sum from the people, justice became a mere engine of corruption and oppression, districts were ruined and depopulated, the police were no better than dacoits who shared their plunder with men in high places. Although, through the efforts of the English minister, all this was reformed, we were told that many years must elapse before the people of Bhopál could recover from the ruin which they suffered.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 1894 a valuable work, *Our Indian Protectorate*, was published by Sir Charles Tupper of the Indian Civil Service. It contains a very clear account of the relations between the British Government and its Indian Feudatories. Sir Charles Tupper, while he fully acknowledged that many native states were well administered, gave some terrible illustrations "to show that the battle with cruelty, superstition, callous indifference to the security of the weaker and poorer classes, avarice, corruption, disorder in all public affairs, and open brigandage is by no means over even at the present day." I will quote one passage only from Sir Charles Tupper's work. "We are not far yet from the confusions of the last century, and deep in existing societies lie predatory instincts which, in the absence of strong control, might soon fill whole provinces with pillage and alarm. In a state where there was a good deal of corruption, and the torture of prisoners was not unknown, a colony settled not long ago, consisting

In 1887 the chief of a small native state was removed from power in circumstances too abominable to be described

In 1895, in consequence of the conduct and intemperance of the chief of Bhartpur, a state well known in the history of the beginning of the last century by its successful resistance to a British army, the Government of India was compelled to interfere for the protection of the people, and the chief, although not formally deposed, was deprived of his powers of administration. In 1900 he shot and killed one of his personal servants who had offended him, all his rights were then declared by the Government of India to be forfeited, he was placed permanently in confinement, his infant son was selected as his successor, and during the minority the administration of the state is to remain under British supervision

In 1901 the uncle of the chief of the Panna state died in circumstances which showed that he had been deliberately poisoned, and the reasons for supposing that the chief himself had instigated the crime were so strong that the Government of India ordered his suspension from power, and assumed the administration of the state until all the facts had been ascertained by a Commission specially appointed. The guilt of the

of the descendants of Thugs. In 1888 there were in three villages 800 of these people all told. They had no occupation except theft, robbery, and the disposal of stolen goods. In a circle of three states not less than 400 miles from the villages of these Thugs, a formidable band of robbers was lately making depredations. In the four years ending February 1889, twenty-two villages had been plundered by daring gangs, forty seven murders committed, fifty one persons wounded, and about two hundred hostages carried off, of whom many were ransomed at enormous gains to the brigands. In another state, in 1885 and 1886, seven or eight bands of dacoits, each fifty to one hundred strong, mostly carrying firearms, had reduced a tract of country some 120 miles long to a state of terror, in the villages all valuables were hidden, and if the dacoits failed to discover the property they expected, the greatest barbarities were practised."



chief was clearly proved, in April 1902 he was deposed, deprived of all his rights and honours, and placed in permanent confinement; and his principal agent in the actual commission of the crime was sentenced to death. The Governor-General in Council reserved to himself the right of selecting a successor as ruler of the state.

Enough has been said to show the condition of many of the native states of India not long ago, and to illustrate the fact that even now the cases are not rare in which the interference of our Government becomes unavoidable. Happily, matters are now far better than they were, and states, the condition of which formerly deserved the strongest condemnation, are now fairly well administered. The improvement was especially marked under the vigorous rule of Lord Curzon, and has been maintained under the sympathetic rule of his successor, Lord Minto.<sup>1</sup> The British Government now fully recognises the responsibilities which rest upon it as the paramount power in India. Its supervision is exercised in a far more reasonable manner than was formerly the case. It can no longer be said, as Sir Henry Lawrence said many years ago, that if ever there was a

<sup>1</sup> [In the course of an important speech made at a state banquet at Udaipur on September 3, 1909, Lord Minto explained that the Government of India, in their intercourse with native states, were feeling their way to "a more sympathetic and therefore more elastic policy." After citing Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858 and King Edward's Coronation Message as pledges that "our policy is with rare exceptions one of non interference in the internal affairs of native states," he defined that policy as "the recognition of identity of interests between the Imperial Government and Durbars and the minimum of interference with the latter in their own affairs." He expressed a wish that reforms should emanate from the Durbars themselves, that their sentiments and aspirations should be studied, and that they should not be pressed to introduce British methods of administration. Lord Minto's speech has been taken by some to indicate an abrupt change in the policy pursued by his immediate predecessors, but it is doubtful whether this was intended. The more probable interpretation is that the speech merely described the natural evolution of the relations between the Indian Government and the native states under the altered and altering conditions of India. See Note at the end of the Chapter.]

device for ensuring maladministration, it was that of a native ruler backed up by British bayonets, and directed by a British resident. Owing to the continued efforts of our Government in encouraging and providing means for their better education, many of the native chiefs have become more enlightened and more alive to their duties towards their people. The example of the increasing prosperity and wealth of the people living under our Government has had powerful effects. The improved means of communication, and especially the extension of railways, have brought about great changes throughout India, and the people themselves in the native states are no longer as helpless and silent as they once were; they are becoming alive to the fact that in the last resort they can appeal to the British Government for protection against oppression.

There are not many positions in which a man has larger powers for good than that of the enlightened ruler of a native state. He is protected by the British Government from all anxiety outside his own territory. He requires no armed force except for the maintenance of order among his own people. He has at his disposal, in many cases, very considerable resources. His state shares, as a rule, without any charges being imposed on it the benefits derived from the railways and other public works constructed by our Government. He has no difficulties such as those that beset on all sides our own administration. Wise and upright chiefs, followed by worthy successors, might bring their states into a condition of almost utopian prosperity. But, if the opportunities are great, so have been the temptations which lead to failure and dishonour, and unrestricted personal power is inevitably doomed in India to the same ultimate fate which has attended it elsewhere.

The British Government has for many years past ceased to desire further extensions of territory in India, and it is difficult to imagine circumstances under which the annexation of a native state would now be considered expedient<sup>1</sup> The complete recognition of the right of adoption and the experience of the last quarter of a century have in this respect removed from the minds of the native princes all suspicion of the policy of our Government. There is only one apparent cause by which the political existence of any of these states could now be imperilled We are far from desiring that their government should necessarily be like ours, but as our own administration improves, and everything in India becomes increasingly open to public criticism and inquiry, the more impossible will it be for us to tolerate gross oppression and misgovernment

The problems to be solved are often difficult, especially in those states, the most interesting in India, and the most worthy of preservation, where old political institutions still survive. Where the ruler is a petty despot, with few or no checks on his arbitrary power, the principles on which we ought to act are easier to define No real progress in such states is possible while their governments remain purely personal, based upon

<sup>1</sup> ["I have often," Lord Curzon said in his speech at the state banquet at Jaipur on Nov 28, 1902, "recapitulated the benefits which in my view the continued existence of the native states confers upon Indian society Amid the levelling tendencies of the age and the inevitable monotony of government conducted on scientific lines, they keep alive the traditions and customs, they sustain the virility, and they save from extinction the picturesqueness of ancient and noble races They have that indefinable quality, endearing them to the people, that arises from being born of the soil. They provide scope for the activities of the hereditary aristocracy of the country, and employment for native intellect and ambition " Recent events in India have shown the strength which accrues to the paramount power from the existence of native states whose interests are bound up with the continuance of British rule, and whose rulers are anxious to co-operate with it in resisting the dissemination of doctrines subversive of internal peace and good government. See Note at the end of the Chapter ]

nothing more permanent than the will of the chief, whose character and capacity are accidents, and while the authority of the paramount power is exercised on no fixed system, but spasmodically, by special acts of intervention as necessity arises

The first serious attempt to give a clear definition of the principles on which the relations of the Imperial Government towards the native states of India ought to be conducted was made by Lord Lytton when he was Viceroy. In 1830 the administration of Mysore had fallen into a miserable condition. Offices were sold to the highest bidder, the people were oppressed and impoverished, and at last broke into revolt. Lord William Bentinck, who was then Governor-General, ordered, as the only sufficient remedy, the transfer of the entire administration into the hands of British officers. Mysore was fortunate in finding in Sir Mark Cubbon an admirable Governor. "The history of the province under his rule" (I quote from an official report) "is the history of a people made happy by release from serfdom, and of a ruined state restored to financial prosperity."

In 1868 the deposed Rájá died, and the British Government resolved that when his adopted son, who was then only six years old, attained his majority, the Government of the state should be entrusted to him.

1st A clear distinction must be drawn and permanently maintained between the private fortune of the chief and the public revenues of the state, a civil list of fixed amount must be assigned to the chief, and the rest of the revenues must remain available for public purposes only, through appropriation by constituted authorities

2nd. There must be permanent security for the observance of established laws, rights, and usages, and the laws must only be altered by suitable legislative machinery

3rd Provision must be made for the judicial independence of the civil and criminal courts, and justice must be dispensed by regularly constituted tribunals

4th The assessment and collection of the revenues must be made under fixed rules, all rights in the land must be defined and maintained, and no fresh taxation imposed except in accordance with law

Under the principles thus laid down, and which have been acted upon ever since, the administration was made over, in 1881, to the native chief. His civil list was fixed at £130,000 a year, and he cannot appropriate more than that sum for his personal expenditure. The revenue of the state is now about £1,250,000. The administration is carried on by the Māharāja with the assistance of a council, the members of which are natives of the country. When the Government was transferred it was provided that all laws then in force should be maintained until altered by competent authority; new laws can only be made under a regular system of procedure, and they require the sanction of the Governor-General in Council.

The objects with which this system was initiated

were summed up as follows by the Government of Lord Lytton —

“The experiment of placing the Máharája of Mysore at the head of a constitutional government—that is, a government conducted upon fixed and fundamental principles—makes a new departure in the policy of the Imperial Government towards the native states of India. To determine the proper method of dealing with these states, and of discharging the responsibilities which they entail upon the paramount power, has always been, and still is, a problem of great difficulty, for the improvement of their condition, and their gradual assimilation to the general system and standard of the Imperial Government, is almost essential to their preservation. The supreme Government has been obliged of late years to interpose frequently in the affairs of native states. The incapacity or grave misconduct of a ruler has produced complications which have demanded immediate and stringent remedies, or the interval of a long minority has made it necessary to superintend more closely a state’s management. The policy now framed proceeds upon the broad principle that in order to guard against chronic misrule in a native state, and to obviate the necessity for frequent and arbitrary interposition by the supreme Government to remedy the consequences of such misrule, it is expedient to avail ourselves of every opportunity of placing some reasonable limitations upon the personal power of the ruler, or of the minister to whom the administration may be entrusted. The limitations thus imposed must be brought on public record, in order to place them beyond question or controversy, and in certain cases the general power of supervision to be exercised by the supreme Government may need to be strengthened and extended. These principles may form the groundwork of a settled policy which will guide the Government of India in the general discharge of its responsibilities towards feudatory states. A new and valuable precedent will have been established, and thus, with the experience which will have been gained in Mysore, may enable us in future to deal systematically with similar questions of reorganisation or reform. The contrast presented by the steady growth of orderly civilisation in British India, and the increased publicity that is now given to the internal condition of our feudatory states, are likely to render more and more imperative

the duty of interference in restraint of serious mismanagement. We may thus hope gradually to raise the general standard of administration in native states, and to make some progress towards the important political object of consolidating their institutions upon an improved and stable foundation " <sup>1</sup>

The system thus introduced into Mysore has worked efficiently and well. While it has placed reasonable checks on the arbitrary power of the ruler, his proper authority has been maintained, the administration has been in native hands, and there has been no necessity for that frequent interference by the British authorities which in some other states has often been unavoidable, but which is nevertheless incompatible with good government.

The Máharája died in 1894, leaving as his heir an infant son, and it became necessary for the Viceroy to appoint a regent during the minority of the young chief. The choice fell upon his mother, and its wisdom was shown by the intelligence and dignity which, throughout the minority, she showed in the management of the affairs of the state. Her son received an excellent English education, and careful training to prepare him for the proper performance of his future duties, and, in 1902, he was formally installed by the Viceroy as Máharája.

The wisdom of the principles laid down for the Government of Mysore has been amply proved by experience, and although they have not been applied in other cases in precisely the same form, they are in practical accordance with those on which the Government of India now regulates its proceedings towards the native states when necessity or fitting opportunities

<sup>1</sup> Despatch from Government of India to Secretary of State, 22nd May 1879. Parliamentary Return, Mysore, 1881.

occur. Such opportunities have not been unfrequent. There have often been long minorities during which the administration of the state has been reorganised and reformed, and when the time has come for placing the young chief at the head of his Government, this has been done under suitable conditions which he is bound to observe, and which cannot be altered without the consent of the paramount power. An illustration is seen in the important Marátha state of Gwalior, the gross misgovernment of which not many years ago has been already described. During a long minority the state was brought into a condition of greatly increased prosperity and wealth, and when the minority ended the chief was able to take his place at the head of a well-organised administration as an educated, intelligent, and enlightened man, alive to the duties which he owed to his people. I have already noticed his presence in London at the coronation of the King. He gave another example of his loyalty by fitting out at his own expense a hospital ship for the service of the troops in China, and by himself accompanying the expedition.

In January 1903, Holkar, the ruler of Indore, after attending, in token of his loyalty to the British Crown, the great durbar at Delhi, abdicated his chiefship in favour of his son, a boy of twelve years old. During his minority every care has been given to his education and training, and the administration of the state is being reformed and carried on by a council of native ministers, with the help, as required, of the British resident. Thus we may reasonably hope that in both of the Marátha states of Central India, Gwalior and Indore, the foundations of good government have been laid.

Kashmir offers another example of the results obtained by the wise intervention of the British Govern-



ment. Speaking of this state with personal knowledge, Sir Lepel Griffin wrote, in 1883, that "nothing escapes taxation, and bare life is all that the state leaves to the cultivator, whose position is harder and as hopeless as that of a slave." The shameful maladministration of this beautiful country was too long tolerated, but at last, in 1889, the patience of the British Government was exhausted. The Máharája was for a time deprived of all authority, and when, after some years had elapsed, and the administration had been completely reformed, he was allowed to resume his position as head of the state, it was under new conditions. The government is successfully carried on with a council, acting with the advice, when necessary, of a British resident, in a manner very similar to that established in Mysore. It has become virtually a constitutional Government, and the gross oppression from which the people long suffered has ceased.<sup>1</sup>

Among the more important native states Haiderabad, the largest of them all, is probably that in which up to the last few years the administration has been most unsatisfactory. There is no part of India in which the people have less sympathy with their rulers, men, as I have already shown, of other countries and of another faith. Frequent interference by the British Government has in the past been necessary, the misfortune has been that it was not more complete and efficacious. Excepting sometimes for a short period, no government in India has been worse than that of the Nizam. During the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, his wise influence brought

<sup>1</sup>A complete and most interesting account of Kashmir will be found in Sir Walter Lawrence's work, *The Valley of Kashmir*. He was employed there for several years, a survey and a settlement of the land revenue were carried out under his orders, and it is to him that no small part of the honour is due for the immense improvements that have been effected in the administration of the state.

about valuable reforms. The Nizam entrusted to a British Officer the supervision of the finances of the state, which had fallen into a state of the utmost confusion, and has given him his support and confidence with the happiest results. Not the least useful part of Lord Curzon's work in Haiderabad was the final settlement of the long-standing difficulties connected with our administration of Berár. This province, with an area of nearly 18,000 square miles, and a population, in 1903, of 2,754,000, had long been under the dominion of the Nizam, and in 1853 was assigned to the British Government, with the object of providing from its revenues the charges for the so-called Haiderabad contingent, a force of more than 7000 men under the command of British officers, which was maintained permanently at the capital of the state. The terms of the treaty under which Berár was assigned to us became, in process of time, a constant cause of dissatisfaction and complaint on the part of the Nizam's government. The revenues of Berár under British administration largely increased. The Nizam was entitled under the treaty to whatever surplus revenues remained after all necessary charges had been met, but the amount of those charges was left to the discretion of the British Government, whose views regarding administrative requirements and the necessity for material improvements differed greatly from those of the government of the Nizam. Frequent attempts were made to obtain the abrogation of the treaty and the restoration of the province, and, sometimes by means which commend themselves not only to oriental chiefs but to those who profit by them, and of which I will say nothing, it was not difficult to find in England loud advocates of the claims of the Nizam. Nor were

honourable advocates wanting, influenced by sentiment, or ignorance, or by the not uncommon assumption of Englishmen that our treatment of India constantly involves some gross injustice to the people of the country. To restore to a Muhammadan government, one of the most corrupt and oppressive in India, and one almost as foreign to the people of the country as our own, a great Hindu population, which for a long period had been prospering under British rule, would have been a disgrace and a crime<sup>1</sup>. All controversies on this subject were settled in 1902 by Lord Curzon on terms which, while they protected the people of Berár, gave liberal recognition to the claims of the Nizam. A fixed annual payment is made by the British Government to the Government of the Nizam, his nominal rights of sovereignty are maintained; and Berár is now permanently administered in all respects as though it were a British province.

I must not close this chapter without referring to the measures that have been taken for enabling the chiefs of native states to obtain an education that will make them more competent to discharge the duties that fall upon them.

When the Indian universities were first established, Lord Canning expressed the hope that the time was near when the nobility and upper classes of India would think that they had not had the dues of their rank unless they passed through the course of a university. This expectation has not been fulfilled. The upper classes, even where no religious objections have existed, have for the most part kept themselves aloof. India being a country where the influence of birth and position

<sup>1</sup> Almost the whole population of Berár is Hindu. Out of a total of 2,754,000, in 1901, there were only 212,000 Muhammadans.

is great, this has been unfortunate, but it is not surprising. The princes and chiefs and great landholders of India have seldom been educated. To be absolutely illiterate involves, even at the present time, no discredit; sometimes, indeed—but it may be hoped that this is ceasing to be true—it is held to be honourable, because to be anything else would be a violation of immemorial custom. Native chiefs and nobles had, with rare exceptions, no disposition to send their sons to our colleges, not only because they cared little for education, but because they were afraid of loss of social dignity, or contamination of caste.

To meet these difficulties an excellent beginning was made when Lord Mayo was Viceroy, by the establishment of special colleges. The Mayo College at Ajmir was founded by Lord Mayo for the education of the sons and relatives of the chiefs, nobles, and principal families of Rájputána. Many of them sent their sons to the college. It was liberally endowed by the chiefs, and received a grant-in-aid from our Government, and boarding-houses for their cadets were erected by all the principal states. Similar colleges were afterwards established at Indore, Lahore, and Rajkot. English and oriental languages, mathematics, history, and geography are among the studies. "It is not desired," the Education Commission wrote, "to make these young chiefs great scholars, but to encourage in them a healthy tone and manly habits."

Lord Curzon during his viceroyalty spared no efforts to increase the efficiency of these colleges, and in 1902 he took another step of great interest by the formation of an Imperial Cadet Corps, which is ordinarily to be recruited from the chiefs' colleges. The corps, in the words of the rules framed by the Viceroy, was

organised "with the main object of providing a military training for selected members of the aristocracy of India, and of giving them such a general education that whilst, in course of time, they may be able to take their places in the Imperial army as British officers, they may never lose their character and bearing as Indian gentlemen" With this object in view, the cadets are placed under strict military discipline, and undergo a course of instruction, extending over two or three years and including drill, riding and military exercises out-of-doors, and indoor study of English, mathematics and military science. Cadets who fully satisfy the requirements of the rules and the course of training are eligible for special commissions in the army. These are from time to time conferred. They carry the rank and pay of officers in His Majesty's service, with military employment in extra-regimental posts. Under the rules the number of cadets in training at any time is limited to twenty. But the full number has seldom been worked up to, and during the last few years the corps has been at half strength or under. At the outset the scheme attracted great interest among the princely and noble families for whose scions it offered the opening of a military career. But the strict discipline and restraint, the length of the training, the protracted absences from home which it involves, and the uncertainty of the career it offers, have been against the popularity of the scheme. It is still in a tentative and experimental stage, and may have to be modified. Seventy-six cadets have joined the corps since its establishment, and eight have received special commissions. At the great coronation durbar at Delhi in January 1903, the corps was in attendance on the Viceroy, and won admiration for its manly and distinguished bearing.

Some account has already been given of the armies of the native states, and of the arrangements under which some of them furnish contingents for Imperial service<sup>1</sup>

## NOTES TO CHAPTER XXIV

### 1 EXTRACT FROM LORD MINTO'S SPEECH AT UDAIPUR, NOVEMBER 3, 1909 (Page 524)

"I have always been opposed to anything like pressure on Durbars with a view to introducing British methods of administration,—I have preferred that reforms should emanate from the Durbars themselves, and grow up in harmony with the traditions of the State. It is easy to over-estimate the value of administrative efficiency—it is not the only object to aim at, though the encouragement of it must be attractive to keen and able political officers, and it is not unnatural that the temptation to further it should for example appeal strongly to those who are temporarily in charge of the administration of a state during a minority, whether they are in sole charge or associated with a state council. Their position is a difficult one—it is one of peculiar trust—and though abuses and corruption must of course as far as possible be corrected, I cannot but think that political officers would do wisely to accept the general system of administration to which the chief and his people have been accustomed. The methods sanctioned by tradition in states are usually well adapted to the needs and relations of the ruler and his people. The loyalty of the latter to the former is generally a personal loyalty, which administrative efficiency, if carried out on lines unsuited to local conditions, would lessen or impair"

### 2 PROPOSED ADVISORY COUNCIL OF RULING CHIEFS. (Page 526)

The Government of Lord Minto in their first draft of a scheme of constitutional reforms included a project of an Imperial Advisory Council. It was proposed that the Council should consist of twenty ruling chiefs and a suitable number of territorial magnates of British India. The Council was to have no legislative or executive powers, but was to constitute a body of advisers who would be consulted individually by the Governor-General, and would be occasionally called together for

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter XXIII

collective deliberation. It was to represent the views of the hereditary leaders of the people, both in British India and in the principal native states, and associate them in some degree with the Governor-General in the guardianship of common and Imperial interests.

The scheme in the form in which it was put before the local Governments and the native chiefs for consideration was not favourably received. The chiefs were opposed to a Council of mixed composition, as they objected to sit with territorial magnates. From another point of view, the objection was taken that the native chiefs had no knowledge of the conditions of British India and that they would not be useful advisers of the Government. Lord Minto's Government accordingly decided not to proceed with the project of a mixed council. Yet they thought that there was room for a Council composed only of ruling chiefs. Its scope would be necessarily narrower than the Council originally proposed. But there were many questions of an Imperial character on which the advice of ruling chiefs would, it was thought, be of great value. Lord Minto proposed that the number of councillors should be strictly limited, that they should be appointed by the Viceroy, should hold office during his pleasure, and the Viceroy should at his discretion consult any of them, individually or collectively, as he might think fit from time to time.

Lord Morley, in conveying the views of the Secretary of State in Council on the scheme in a despatch of Nov 27, 1908, expressed his entire appreciation of and sympathy with the object of the scheme, but found the practical difficulties in the way of such a Council assembling under satisfactory conditions, considerable. He also doubted whether the proposals had the clear assent and approval of those whose presence in the Council would be essential to its success. But he was prepared to give any scheme a full and fair trial which was at once acceptable to the leading chiefs and workable in practice. In thus remitting the matter to the Government of India for further consideration in consultation with the chiefs, Lord Morley was careful to explain that he was far from wishing to discourage consultation with individual chiefs, according to existing practice. "No one," he wrote, "with any part to play in Indian government can doubt the manifold advantages of still further developing not only amicable but confidential relations of this kind with the loyal rulers of India, possessed as they are of such peculiar authority and experience."

The project of an Imperial Advisory Council of Ruling Chiefs still remains an attractive idea, which has not yet found a practical solution. A striking illustration was given, shortly after this discussion, of the advantage which the Government of India may derive from consulting the rulers of native states. In August 1909 Lord Minto by letters addressed to twenty-two of the leading chiefs invited 'a full and frank

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expression' of their opinion as to measures which might be necessary for them to adopt against attempts to propagate in their territories disaffection against British rule in India. The replies of the chiefs, which were published in the *Gazette of India* in January 1910, were not only full of prudent and sensible counsel, but were also an impressive demonstration of the loyalty and good faith of the rulers themselves.



## CHAPTER XXV

### CONCLUSION

Cruel customs—Neglect of social questions—Reasons for avoiding their discussion—The employment of natives in the public service—Political hypocrisy—The duty of maintaining our dominion—Offices to be retained by Englishmen—Natives of India often as much foreigners as Englishmen in provinces other than their own—Sir Syad Ahmad Khán on Muhammadans and Hindus—The results of British government—The popularity of our government—Lord Lawrence's opinion—Reasons why our government cannot be popular—The dangers to which our dominion is exposed—The principles on which our government must be conducted

THERE is no province in India without customs which we think must be repugnant to all civilised men, but which are almost universally respected because they are believed to have been divinely ordained, or which have come down from a remote antiquity. There is hardly a province in which horrid and cruel practices would not instantly spring into vigorous life if our watchfulness were relaxed. The prohibition of the burning of widows was, and is still, disapproved by all but a small minority of Hindus. I doubt whether the majority even of the more highly educated classes approve it. I gave in a previous chapter an account of the wholesale murder of female children, which, in parts of India, has gone on for centuries, a custom against which

the Hindu, however enlightened, hardly ever raises his voice, and which, with all our efforts, we have not yet succeeded in eradicating. But for us, even in the provinces where education has made its greatest progress, Káli would still claim her human victims. Not many years ago, in a time of drought, near a railway station twenty-five miles from Calcutta, a human head was found before her idol, decked with flowers, and in another temple in Bengal a boy was savagely murdered and offered to the goddess. While a former edition of this book was passing through the press, a ghastly story came from the Central Provinces of the sacrifice of a young man to the local gods, in obedience to a widely prevalent belief and ancient practice that this is a sure means of obtaining a plentiful harvest. Horrors such as these receive no general condemnation in India, nor does the determination of our Government that they shall be suppressed often gain for us any practical signs of approval or sympathy even from the educated classes. Interference with ancient custom is usually an abomination to a Hindu, whether it be his own custom or not.

There are in India many questions of another order which are still more difficult to solve, because we cannot deal with them by the strong hand of the law. I will mention one only as an illustration, the custom of child marriage. As its not unfrequent consequence multitudes of girls are given over to outrage, or if they belong to the higher classes of Hindus, doomed to lives of miserable and degraded widowhood. Some of the most holy Brahmans of Bengal made, not long ago, a living by being husbands. A child of five or six was given as perhaps the fortieth or fiftieth wife of some old man, sometimes two sisters were given to the same



government of men, and which have given us our empire. The stock-in-trade with which Englishmen start in life is not that of Bengális, but I must not say this of Englishmen only, for it is also, in a great measure, true of the more vigorous races of India, although their time has not come for competitive examinations.

Few would go farther than I would go in opening the public service in India to natives 'of proved merit and ability,' but it is well to avoid 'political hypocrisy.' "Is there," Lord Salisbury asked, "any man who will have the hardihood to tell me that it is within the range of possibility that a man in India should be appointed lieutenant-governor of a province, or chief commissioner, or commander-in-chief of the army, or Viceroy, without any regard whatever to his race?" Some will answer even this question in the affirmative. There will always be people ready to accept with composure any political folly, provided that it involves some triumph of sentiment over sense, and some appearance of national humiliation. When we say that we cannot always ignore differences of race, this is only another way of saying that the English in India are a handful of foreigners responsible for the government of nearly 300 millions of people. I have said that we are foreigners in India in a different sense from that in which we are foreigners in Paris, and that the people of one Indian province are often almost as much foreigners to the people of another province as we are ourselves, still, we are foreigners, and although I suppose that no foreign government was ever accepted with less repugnance than that with which the British Government is accepted in India, the fact remains that there never was a country, and never will be, in which the government of foreigners is really

popular It would be the beginning of the end of our empire if we were to forget this elementary fact, and were to entrust the greater executive powers to the hands of natives, on the assumption that they will always be faithful and strong supporters of our government. In this there is nothing offensive or disparaging to the natives of India. It simply means that we are foreigners, and that, not only in our own interests but because it is our highest duty towards India itself, we intend to maintain our dominion We cannot foresee the time in which the cessation of our rule would not be the signal for universal anarchy and ruin, and it is clear that the only hope for India is the long continuance of the benevolent but strong government of Englishmen Let us give to the natives the largest possible share in the administration In some branches of the service there is almost no limit to the share of public employment which they may properly receive This is especially true of the Bench, for the performance of the judicial duties of which natives have shown themselves eminently qualified, and in which the higher offices are equal in importance and dignity and emolument to almost any of the great offices of the state Even on the Bench, however, there are important administrative duties for which some degree of English supervision is necessary, nor would it be politically wise to place this great department of the Government altogether in native hands Prejudices of race may be regretted, but they cannot be ignored, and it would be a dangerous experiment to give to native judges an unlimited power of control over English magistrates For my own part, subject to some restrictions, there are few judicial offices in India that I would not throw open to natives of their own provinces But let

there be no hypocrisy about our intention to keep in the hands of our own people those executive posts—and there are not very many of them—on which, and on our political and military power, our actual hold of the country depends. Our governors of provinces, the chief officers of our army, our district officers and their principal executive subordinates must be Englishmen under all circumstances that we can now foresee, and in all departments of essential importance there must be selected Englishmen to maintain a standard of high efficiency<sup>1</sup>

It is not only in regard to the employment in India of our own countrymen that we ought never to forget differences of race. It is quite as essential to remember

<sup>1</sup> [The constitutional reforms associated with the names of Lord Morley and Lord Minto involve no departure from the principle that the ultimate control of the executive government in India should remain in British hands. In their first draft of the scheme for liberalising the Legislative Councils, published in August 1907, Lord Minto's Government explained that the scheme was subject to the "essential condition that the executive authority of the Government is maintained in undiminished strength." The instructions issued in September of the same year to the Royal Commission on decentralisation in India used similar language. Their recommendations were not to impair "the strength and unity" of the executive power. In the important despatch of the 27th November 1908, in which the Secretary of State in Council accepted the substantial part of the Government of India's proposals for enlarging, reconstituting on a representative basis, and extending the functions of the Legislative Councils, the aim and scope of the reforms are clearly stated. They are "to enable the Government the better to realise the wants, interests and sentiments of the governed, and on the other hand to give the governed a better chance of understanding, as occasion arises, the case for the Government, against the misrepresentations of ignorance and malice." In an admirable speech made at the National Congress held in Madras in December 1909, Mr Gokale aptly described the nature of the change from the point of view of the Indian reformer. "Hitherto," he said, "we have been engaged in agitation from the outside, from now we shall be engaged in what may be called responsible association with the administration. It is not control of the administration it is still not a large share in the administration, but it is responsible association with the administration."

The appointment of two Indian gentlemen to seats in the Council of India, and of an Indian member to the Viceroy's Executive Council and to the Executive Councils of Bombay, Madras and Bengal, is in harmony with the same principle—the principle of responsible association of the people of India with the administration.]

them in connection with the employment of Indians. I have often insisted on the fact that, strictly speaking, there is really no such country as India.<sup>1</sup> I must repeat that such terms as 'people of India' and 'natives of India' are meaningless in the sense in which they are frequently used. The term 'natives of India' applied generally to Brahmans from Bengal, Parsis from Bombay, Sikhs from Lahore, Gurkhas from Nepal, and to Gonds from the Central Provinces, has no more meaning than the term 'natives of Europe' applied generally to Englishmen, Poles, Spaniards, and Turks. As I have said before, no countries and no peoples in Europe differ from each other so profoundly as countries and peoples differ in India. No good administration or permanent political security is possible unless facts of this kind are remembered. It ought never to be forgotten that it can never be assumed that because a man is a 'native of India' he has any natural claim, different in kind from that of an Englishman, to be employed in the public service in every part of India. Often, indeed, you may go much further. I used no terms of exaggeration when I said that a native of Calcutta is more of a foreigner to the hardy races on the frontiers of northern India than an Englishman. To suppose that the manlier races of India could ever be governed through the feeble foreigners of another Indian country, however intellectually acute those foreigners may be—that Sikhs and Patháns, for instance, should submit to be ruled by Bengáls—is to suppose an absurdity. To ignore this order of facts is made especially dangerous by the position which the Muhammadans hold in India. The Muhammadan of northern India often remembers with pride that his ancestors belonged to the ruling race, and he

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter I

accepts with natural regret, but with no humiliation, the government of Englishmen. Although he may not love them, he admits that they must be respected. But the thought of being governed by a Hindu foreigner from Bengal fills him with indignation and contempt.

I have already referred to the proposal that competitive examinations for the Civil Service of India should be held in India as well as in England. It cannot too often be repeated that the adoption of such a plan could in no way tend to make our government more popular or to render it, in public estimation, less than at present a government of foreigners. It would transfer a certain number of important offices now held by Englishmen to men drawn from a very small class of Hindus who have alone received the sort of education which would enable them to pass the necessary examinations, who, although we choose to call them 'natives of India,' would be to at least 200 millions of the Indian populations almost as much foreigners as we are ourselves. One of the inevitable consequences would be the anger and discontent of the more intelligent of our Muhammadan subjects.

I remember a conversation which I once had with one of the most eminent members of the noble families of Oudh, the well-known Maharaja Mán Singh, a man of rare sagacity, whose intellect, position, wealth, and influence made him the most important personage in his province. Referring to this subject of holding competitive examinations for the Civil Service in India, "I am afraid," I said, "that for a long time to come there would be no candidates from this part of India, it is only in Bengal that young men could be found who would have any chance of



success in such an examination as that required. The result would be that you would some day have a Bengálí as your chief district officer." I shall not forget the scorn with which he drew himself up and replied to me, "And does any one think that we, the men of this country, would stand that? Do you suppose that you could govern us with Bengálís? Never!"

This book was almost ready for the press<sup>1</sup> when the reports reached England of some remarkable speeches made by Sir Syad Ahmad Khán at two great meetings of Muhammadans in northern India. I referred in a previous chapter to Sir Syad Ahmad Khán, and to the work to which his life was devoted<sup>2</sup>. I mention these speeches because they illustrate the practical importance of the fact on which I have repeatedly insisted, with which I began this book, and with which I wish to end it, that the most essential of all things to be learnt about India is that it is a continent filled with the most diverse elements, that it is the strong hand of England alone which maintains peace among them, and that, if our vigilance were relaxed, anarchy and bloodshed would spread themselves over the land. No Englishman could speak with higher authority than Sir Syad Ahmad Khán, and there was no one, Englishman or native, more worthy of respect for his wisdom and of admiration for his character. It was his special aim in these speeches to protest on behalf of his Muhammadan fellow-countrymen against the assumption that they could be treated as belonging to the same nation as the Hindus of Bengal, and to express his contempt for the political nostrums which it is often proposed to apply throughout India. If these were adopted, the result, he said, would be that "there would be no part of the

<sup>1</sup> First Edition, 1888

<sup>2</sup> Chapter XVI

country in which we should see at the tables of justice and authority any faces except those of Bengális I am delighted to see the Bengális making progress, but what would be the result on the public administration? Do you think that the Rájput and the fiery Pathán would remain in peace under Bengális?"

" Suppose that all the English were to leave India, who would be rulers of India? Is it possible that under those circumstances Muhammadans and Hindus could sit on the same throne and remain equal in power? Most certainly not It is necessary that one of them should conquer the other and thrust it down You must remember that although the number of Muhammadans is less than that of the Hindus, and although they contain far fewer people who have received a high English education, yet they must not be thought insignificant or weak Probably they would be by themselves enough to maintain their own position But suppose they were not Then our Musalman brothers, the Patháns, would come out as a swarm of locusts from their mountain valleys—like a swarm of locusts would they come—and make rivers of blood to flow from their frontier on the north to the extreme end of Bengal This thing—who after the departure of the English would be conquerors—would rest on the will of God But until one nation had conquered the other and made it obedient, peace could not reign in the land This conclusion is based on proofs so absolute that no one can deny it Be not unjust to the British Government, to whom God has given the rule of India And look honestly, and see what is necessary for it to do to maintain its empire and its hold on the country You can appreciate these matters, but they cannot who have never held a country in their hands nor won a victory O my brother Musalmans! I again remind you that you have ruled nations, and have for centuries held different countries in your grasp For seven hundred years in India you have had Imperial sway You know what it is to rule Be not unjust to that nation which is ruling over you And think also on this, how upright is her rule Of such benevolence as the English Government shows to the foreign nations under her there is no example in the history of the world "

These are illustrations of the opinions of a man more universally honoured by those who deserve honour in India than perhaps any other man that could be named, and who was entitled to speak on behalf of all that is best and enlightened among Indian Muhammadans. Nor must it be supposed that these views were prompted by prejudices of race or religion. No man could have shown more conspicuously than Sir Syad Ahmad Khán his absolute freedom from such influences, or have given by the conduct of his life stronger practical proof of his respect and regard for his Hindu fellow-subjects. He merely stated what he and his Muhammadan brothers know to be the truth.

"It is better," says a famous writer, "to follow the real truth of things than an imaginary view of them." If intelligent men in England would make themselves acquainted with "the real truth of things," they would understand how purely imaginary is that 'Indian nation' and that 'people of India' of which we hear so much.

I must now bring this work to a close. I have endeavoured to give some general idea of what India is and of the results which she has obtained from the establishment of our power. No reasonable man can doubt the answer that we must give to the question whether the 300,000,000 of people inhabiting the numerous countries of India have benefited by our government.

The first great and obvious fact, overshadowing all other facts in significance, is this, that in place of a condition of society given up, as it was immediately before our time, to anarchy and to the liability to every conceivable form of violence and oppression, we have now absolute peace. Let not this unspeakable blessing

of the *pax britannica* be forgotten. There are not many European countries where protection to life and property is so complete. Excepting England and her colonies, and the United States of America, there is hardly a country in the world where there is so little needless interference on the part of the government with personal liberty, or such freedom in the public expression of opinion in matters of politics and religion. Except when not unfrequently the fanaticism and intolerance of rival sects of Muhammadans and Hindus burst into violent conflict, and show what would instantly follow if the strong hand of our Government were withdrawn, unbroken tranquillity prevails. Justice is administered under laws of unequalled excellence and simplicity. There is hardly any country possessing a civilised administration where the public burdens are so light. Mr J S Mill declared his belief that the British Government in India was "not only one of the purest in intention, but one of the most beneficent in act, ever known among mankind." I do not doubt that this is still truer now.

Whether all this makes our Government really popular is another question.

When Lord Lawrence was Viceroy, in 1867, many of the most experienced officers in India were invited to give their opinion whether our Government was more generally popular than that in the native states. As might have been anticipated, nearly all the answers were affirmative, but I shall only refer to that of Lord Lawrence himself. His conclusion was given in these words: "The masses of the people are incontestably more prosperous, and—*sua si bona norunt*—far more happy in British territory than they are under native rulers." No Englishman knew India better than Lord

Lawrence That the people had been made more prosperous by our administration was, in his opinion, beyond controversy, but when it came to the question of their happiness and of our popularity, well—at any rate they *ought* to be more happy The proviso is significant, *sua si bona nōrunt*

The truth is that, in a country in the condition of India, the more actively enlightened our Government becomes the less likely it is to be popular Our Government is highly respected, the confidence of the people in our justice is unlimited That accomplished traveller, Baron von Hubner, says in his excellent book, *Through the British Empire*, that if proof were needed to show how deeply rooted among the people is this trust in English justice, he would quote the indisputable fact that throughout India the native prefers, in civil and still more in criminal cases, to go before an English judge “I think,” he says, “it would be impossible to render a more flattering testimony to British rule” The duty was once imposed upon me of transferring a number of villages which had long been included in a British district to one of the best governed of the native states I shall not forget the loud and universal protests of the people against the cruel injustice with which they considered they were being treated Every one who has had experience of similar cases tells the same story

The sympathies between the people and their English rulers can hardly be anything but imperfect The system of caste and the differences in all our habits make social intimacy difficult Instances of insolence and brutality on the part of Englishmen undoubtedly occur, but the assertion that they are very frequent is false At the same time it is true that the ordinary

Englishman is too rough and vigorous and straightforward to be a very agreeable person to the majority of the natives of India. These, however, are not reasons which seriously affect the popularity of our Government. Because according to the only standards that we can accept it is good, it can hardly be popular.

I never heard of a great measure of improvement that was popular in India, even among the classes that have received the largest share of education. No one who has lived, as I have done for the better part of my life, among the people can have towards them feelings other than those of sympathy and affection and respect. They have qualities which deserve all admiration, but they are intensely conservative and intensely ignorant, wedded, to an extent difficult for Europeans to understand, to every ancient custom, and between their customs and religion no line of distinction can be drawn. We often deceive ourselves in regard to the changes that are taking place. We believe that our western knowledge, our railways, and our telegraphs must be breaking up the whole fabric of Hinduism, but these things, as I have said before, have touched only the merest fringe of the ideas and beliefs of the population of India. The vast masses of the people remain in a different world from ours. They dislike everything new, they dislike almost everything that we look upon as progress, and they live, for the most part, in blind ignorance of the aims and ideas of their rulers.

Among all the dangers to which our Indian dominion is exposed, the ignorance of the people is the greatest. The task of removing or at least of diminishing this ignorance is the highest of our duties, but its accomplishment can only come in a distant future, for we have to deal not with a single country and a single people,

but with a multitude of countries that we choose to include under the general name of India, and with a multitude of different peoples, constituting, perhaps, in numbers, one-fifth part of the population of the world. So long as this ignorance continues, no one can say what belief or suspicion or unreasoning panic may not spread like wildfire through the country, or what may be its consequences. No one now doubts that the mutiny of the Bengal army, whatever it may subsequently have become, had its real origin in a panic of this kind, in the general and honest belief of the soldiers that our Government intended to destroy their caste, which involved everything that was most valuable to them in this world and in the next. It is hardly less true now than it was in 1857 that we are liable at all times to such dangers as this. Nothing is too foolish or too extravagant for general acceptance. This ought never to be forgotten. Ominous signs from time to time appear which ought to remind us how easily in India a terrible conflagration may be lighted up. There is no limit to the liability of such a population to be influenced by the assurances or suggestions of religious fanatics and political agitators, or to be disturbed by interference with its prejudices and beliefs.

It would thus be an error to suppose that the British Government is administered in a manner that altogether commends itself to the majority of the Indian population. This we cannot help. Considerations of political prudence compel us to tolerate much that we should wish to alter, and to abstain from much that we might desire to see accomplished, but, subject to this most essential condition, our duty is plain. It is to govern India with unflinching determination on the principles which our superior knowledge tells us are right, although they may be unpopular. I will quote Sir James

Stephen's summary of the principles which we enforce, and with it I may fitly close this book —

“The English in India are the representatives of a belligerent civilisation. The phrase is epigrammatic, but it is strictly true. The English in India are the representatives of peace compelled by force. The Muhammadans would like to tyrannise over Hindus in particular, and in general to propose to every one the alternative between the Koran, the tribute, and the sword. The Hindus would like to rule—over Hindus at least—according to the principles of the Brahmanical religion. They would like to be able to condemn to social infamy every one who, being born a Hindu, did not observe their rites. They would like to see suttee practised, to prevent the re-marriage of widows who were not burnt, to do away with the laws which prevent a change of religion from producing civil disabilities, to prevent a low-caste man from trying or even testifying against a Brahman, and Muhammadans, and Hindus, and Sikhs would all alike wish to settle their old accounts and see who is master. The belligerent civilisation of which I spoke consists in the suppression by force of all these pretensions, and in compelling by force all sorts and conditions of men in British India to tolerate each other. Should the British Government abdicate its functions, it would soon turn order into chaos. No country in the world is more orderly, more quiet, or more peaceful than British India as it is, but if the vigour of the Government should ever be relaxed, if it should lose its essential unity of purpose, and fall into hands either weak or unfaithful, chaos would come again like a flood.”





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